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Editorials

SOME THOUGHTS ON EVANGELISM

BILLY GRAHAM is a very disarming person. During his visit to Toronto in the fall some of us had the privilege of hearing him address a gathering of theological students. We went armed with a whole host of prejudices built up on the basis of a "radio acquaintance" with him and of a more intimate acquaintance with evangelists of the "old fashioned" variety. We found that he had anticipated many of our questions and answered them in a way which, in general, left little to be desired.

Graham makes no pretence at being anything other than he is, a "mass" evangelist. Yet, unlike many who have been caught up in a reawakened interest in evangelism, he does not hold that mass evangelism is the only, or even the best, way to evangelize. Evangelism, he says, is a wheel with many spokes; his only claim is that his method is one of these spokes and thus is valid within its own limits. He knows the difference between his "meetings" and the worship of the Church and he does not confuse "conversion", as the initial commitment to God in Christ, with "salvation" as the remaking of the whole man into the image of Him in whom he believes. For these reasons Graham seeks the closest relations possible with the churches. He does not adopt, at least theoretically, the anti-intellectual attitude of some who believe in and practise his methods; he claims to hold no brief for emotions divorced from thought, or for inspiration divorced from scholarship. He paid John Wesley a compliment in stating his conviction that Wesley was the greatest evangelist of modern times; he asked whether part of Wesley's power did not reside in the fact that he was a theologically educated man. In his statements concerning the authority of Scripture he was not as reassuring as we should have wished him to be; but he did answer one question about the symbolic and mythological character of the biblical witness to revelation in such a way as would have caused alarm among many of his fundamentalist supporters, had they heard it.

We say we were disarmed as Graham answered these and other questions in a most personable way. Yet we are still not at all certain that our assessment of his message and his method can be as uncritically positive as many others find theirs to be. For we cannot help but raise the question whether what Graham says so well in answer to his critics adequately informs what he says and does in the presence of his thousands; whether his sermons do not reflect more of a legalism of letter and spirit than of the Gospel which witnesses to the mysterious and inscrutable love of God in Christ for man the sinner; whether there is not in his attitude and practice a marked tendency to fall prey to a pragmatic spirit which measures success in terms of statistics and subordinates the question of "truth" to the question of

"effectiveness"; whether he does not too unquestioningly employ the knowledge and techniques of "social engineering" which, when employed with no matter what humble spirit and God-centred aim, are as questionable in relation to the evangelistic mission of the Church as they are in relation to the social control of human beings in "secular" society. Paul Tillich in the opening pages of his *Systematic Theology* warns against all such pragmatic verification of message and method when he says: "The fact that fundamentalist ideas are eagerly grasped in a period of personal or communal disintegration does not prove their theological validity, just as the success of a liberal theology in periods of personal and communal integration is no certification of truth."

These questions concerning the most effective evangelist of our time, and perhaps of any time, are not raised in any spirit of carping criticism but with all the seriousness that is due so crucial a question as evangelism. One fails miserably to understand the nature and function of the Church of Jesus Christ if one does not realize that evangelism is central to the Church's being and mission. Every act of Christian worship should contain a proclamation of the Gospel which it is man's perennial need to hear. There must also be periodic attempts at evangelism in the more special sense of building up the Church, both intensively and extensively, through concerted efforts aimed at a revival of lapsed or nominal Christians and a conversion of those who are without God in the world. But the practical question of how this is to be done is a theological question, and therefore a question of "truth" and not simply the pragmatic question of effectiveness. That is, the question of the method of evangelizing can be answered only within the context of one's understanding of the nature and function of the Church. There is, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer has pointed out in his small book, '*Life Together*', such a being as "a humanly converted person" whose "conversion was effected, not by the Holy Spirit, but by a man, and therefore has no stability."

It seems that most often the kind of evangelism represented by Billy Graham tends to foster an "individualism" in belief and life which contradicts the corporate nature of the Church. There can be no denying the fact that God in Christ does confront men as individual persons, making His personal claim upon their penitent hearts. But the normal sphere of that confrontation is the worshipping community of faith and love, and its means the proclamation of the Gospel through Word and Sacraments. From this one is led to ask whether the special occasions for evangelism in the narrower sense should not also take place within the context of the regular faith and order, life and work of the Church rather than in ways which make their connection with the Church not immediately apparent and integral.

It is on the basis of such considerations as those set forth above that we would urge a careful rethinking of the question of "mass" evangelism. The question is still, for this writer at least, a very open one.

THE NEED FOR CRITICISM

IT seems fashionable to find fault with the declared policies of one's own denomination. They are either too cautious, too extreme, or a combination of both. Everyone will admit that the Church's opportunity in Canada is unlimited. For some, this means a policy of "more of the same", or a mere expansion of existing programmes. New churches in new areas, bigger budgets, an increased number of clergy, Sunday School teachers, and so on, are sufficient to meet the needs. Others believe that the character of Canadian life has changed so fundamentally that a bold new programme is required. New techniques, new types of building, a new approach to community problems are necessary.

Undoubtedly, Church officials, especially at the regional or national level, tend to conservatism. To them are entrusted large sums of money and the management of the intricate, if not unwieldy, machinery of government. Their constituents are as varied as humanity and each individual is a potential critic. The public press, respectable or otherwise, is ready to pounce on all aberrations from the normal. Any apparent controversy in the Church may easily be distorted into an ugly situation.

Among the rank and file of the Church there is a large body of opinion which instinctively approves of conservative leadership. Ecclesiastes' dictum, "There is nothing new under the sun", is understood as, "There must be nothing new under the sun." Confident of this support, officialdom has a tendency to discourage "mavericks", however brilliant. New ideas are treated with suspicion, "referred to committee", or otherwise buried. Attempts to break the shackles are time-consuming, if not fore-doomed to failure. After repeated efforts to initiate action the experimenter may retreat into bitterness or reluctant conformity.

The cautious types have opposite numbers—the radicals who seem willing to try anything, so long as it is new and gets good coverage in the newspapers. Even after allowance is made for the distortions of news media, some of their ideas seem ill-considered and misapplied. Of this group less need be said, since their work inevitably makes them well known, if not notorious.

We believe that the above is a fair description of some aspects of Church life in Canada. In this issue we are glad to publish a critique of North American attitudes as seen by a distinguished clergyman of the United States. We believe that Canadians too are capable of such constructive self-criticism. There are many experiments going on, not just for increasing attendance or stealing publicity. Church people are thinking seriously about social and political trends and some have reached conclusions of importance to the Church as a whole.

Unfortunately, we have received few manuscripts on so-called practical subjects. In this issue Dr. Pidgeon deals with the problem of religious education in the public schools. Hilda Neatby wrote earlier on the challenge of

education to the Christian Church. In July, some problems of modern missions were discussed by Edward Johnson. We feel that the value of this Journal will be vitiated if we do not continue discussion of such issues, and many others. Subjects can be found without any difficulty and only random examples need be given. Christian work among the Indians and Eskimos is being outclassed by that of the government and secular agencies. The expansion of the North seems to have caught the Church almost hopelessly unprepared. There are congregations, north and south, conducting their affairs with little or no relationship to the drastic social and economic changes going on in their districts. Psychiatric practices are still treated with suspicion born of ignorance. Chaplaincy work of various sorts is entrusted to untrained men and women.

We realize that the people most capable of writing on practical affairs are extremely busy. They complain, with full justice, that they have little time for reflection, let alone for writing. Canadians have not yet reached that stage of maturity which allows them to pay men to take small assignments of administration and large ones of writing. It is not utopian to think that a time must come when they will do so. In the meantime, we are anxious to provide a forum for the discussion of practical affairs. We look forward to receiving, and publishing, analyses of Canadian life which will enable the Church to make the Gospel more meaningful to all.

"The Church" in North America

THEODORE O. WEDEL

ANY one venturing to write on "the meaning of the Church"—a phrase which has doctrinal implications—is in for a frustrating time. Where can he go for a standard of judgment? Neither Catholic nor Protestant theological systems yield a "doctrine" of the Church. "The Reformation concept of the Church," to quote Ernst Troeltsch, "arose not out of opposition to Catholic doctrine, but out of opposition to Catholic practice".[1] Turn to the Catholic tradition and you meet an even more striking vacuum. An Eastern Orthodox scholar comments on this strange blank in the history of Christian thought: "It is impossible to start with a formal definition of the Church. For, strictly speaking, there is none which could claim any doctrinal authority. None can be found in the Fathers or in the Schoolmen, or even in St. Thomas Aquinas".[2] The classic Reformation formula defining the Church as "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered" has value, no doubt as a minimal touchstone of a true church, but (as Brunner and Newbigin, among others, confess) goes only a little way toward throwing light on the real mystery of the Body of Christ. Brunner speaks somewhere of the Holy Spirit as "the step child of theology". He could well make the step child a twin, the Church, along with the Spirit, a kind of theological orphan. "The mystery of the Church," says the "evangelical" Jesuit, de Lubac, "is deeper still, if that were possible, than the mystery of Christ, just as that mystery was more difficult to believe than the mystery of God, a scandal not only to Jews and Gentiles, *but also to many Christians*".[3] The scandal symbolizes itself in such doctrinal riddles as visible over against invisible Church, *Ecclesia* over against Church (Brunner), Church of Faith over against Church in history, *Corpus Christi mixtum* over against *Ecclesia in sanctis*, *virgo mater*, Church over against sect, with the modern "denomination" further darkening counsel.

Has the American scene anything to contribute toward clarifying an understanding of the Church and toward uncovering clues to possible corruptions of its meaning under the Gospel? One contribution meets the observer's eye at once. We live in the midst of an ecclesiological pluralism, or even anarchy, the like of which Christianity has never known before. In such an environment contrasts and comparative value judgments are inescapable; hence out of a study of our denominational pluralism some insights should emerge.

In the European homeland of all but the newest of our denominations, the idea of the "Church normal" is still that of the national or regional church, all Christians in a geographical area constituting the people of God in that locality, although the free churches of England represent, in a

measure, an exception to this. The unit is still the parish, thought of as a neighborhood (with neighbors in the same church), and not as with us, a congregation formed on the basis of choice by a worshipper, a dozen "parishes" being superimposed, layer upon layer, one on top of the others, with identical geographical boundaries, the neighborhood on a Sunday morning being scattered literally to the four points of the compass.

The idea of a national Church is so alien to our American experience, with our revolt against State Church totalitarianism still in memory, that we scarcely ever give it proper attention. State Church Christianity may deserve some or all of our scorn, but the idea of the regional Church and the neighborhood parish does not. However successfully we may have avoided, in fortunate situations, cut-throat competition between denominations, the scandal of disunity remains. And this is not merely a nice theme for sentimental rhetoric. It can be judged by its fruits on any local scene. Bishop Newbigin, in his masterly opening chapter of *The Reunion of the Church*, pictures the devastating result of superimposed denominational parishes on the mission field; the Church of South India, as its very name implies, being itself a return to the idea of the regional church. His analysis condemns us also. "Where," so he puts it (page 15), "there is a multitude of competing congregations it is well-nigh impossible for their members to feel resting upon themselves the full responsibility for their neighbors. Inevitably each congregation becomes more concerned with the maintenance of its own distinctive life. But where there is only one congregation it is impossible for its members to escape from the solemn recollection that on the day of judgment it is they and they alone who can be questioned about their neighbors who had never heard the good news."

Denominational pluralism surely resembles what on the economic plane the churches repudiate—*laissez faire* competitiveness. A "free" ecclesiastical economy is not without happy results. It probably accounts, in part, for our American Church attendance statistics, which fill the European visitor with awe. But an unhappy result is also clearly evident—introversion. Time and effort, particularly on the part of the ministry, is monopolized by the struggle to remain alive, or, in more populous regions, to outdistance a rival denomination in architectural grandeur or parish house comfort. When I drive through Washington, I shudder at times over our mania for church building. Might our competitive Christianity deserve some day to be buried under brick and stone, as God once robbed the ancient *ecclesia* of its temple on His own holy mount? The phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal "sects," which ignore, for a time at least, the call to erect Gothic shrines, could remind us of the fact that "Church", in the New Testament, meant first of all a people of God united by a common faith and the living presence of Christ as Holy Spirit and not by institutional ambitions.

Such an argument needs footnotes, no doubt. Yet introversion is an ominous characteristic of our denominational rivalry, from which the Pentecostal groups are, of course, not exempt either. Consideration of introversion leads into a basic doctrinal question—one concerning the purpose of the

Church in God's design. We confront the biblical doctrine of election. "Churches" we know, but what about *the* Church? Christians are the chosen people of God, "a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (I Peter 2:9). Chosen *out* or chosen *for*? Is the Church the *result* of the proclaimed Gospel, or is it the *instrument* for the proclaiming? Is it end, or is it means for an end? Are its evangelizing efforts to point inward toward itself, snatching converts out of the "world," which is by definition lost and under damnation, or are these efforts to be directed outward toward the world, witnessing to a message of good news and to a covenant of grace not created by the Church at all, but "pre-existent" and embracing world as well as Church, and of which the Church is merely the custodian and outward and visible sign?

I am aware of my inability to formulate this question adequately. Even Frederick Denison Maurice, who spent his life trying to bring it into the open, is not easy reading. But evidence accumulates that one of the most important clues to the meaning of the Church must be sought in wrestling with this dilemma. Rome, with its self-divinization, sees a clear course ahead. Secular culture—the "profane," to use Paul Tillich's designation—is simply devoured and brought under totalitarian rule. Rome is under the illusion that she need not witness to a Kingdom or a covenant beyond herself, since she claims to be that Kingdom in incarnational form. The "sect," in turn—I am thinking of a genuine remnant sect like the Mennonites, though sect mentality is by no means absent from our larger communions—also finds in introversion its true vocation. The Christian congregation is an island of the saved in the midst of an alien world. Rome and the sects assume responsibility for the total life of the community under their control.

Neither of these ways of witnessing to the Gospel seems to be possible for the Protestant "churches." In dealing with them, however, we confront a complex phenomenon, partly symbolized by the fact that we often designate them by the novelty-word "denominations." (It is noteworthy that the Oxford Dictionary cites Benjamin Franklin as the first one to use the word as a synonym for sect, and that it derives from a Latin original meaning "calling by another than the proper name"!) A complete analysis of our denominational pluralism would have to differentiate between the older Reformation communions (Lutheran, Presbyterian, Anglican), transplanted to America and those which have emerged from a more definitely sectarian ancestry. It would also need to trace the metamorphosis which occurs in the life of all but the most stubbornly "monastic" sects when the momentum of the first generation founding has subsided. Motivated at first by building itself up from below on the quality of its members' faith and holiness, the sect is soon compelled to build also from above, borrowing institutional forms and compromised disciplines from its older sister communions. One can think, to cite one crucial example, of the way in which a sect transformed into denomination creates for itself, as do the older churches, a ministerial succession almost as exclusively guarded and nurtured as in the Catholic tradition—an ecumenical scandal which Charles

Clayton Morrison excoriates as the root sin of our rival denominational imperialisms.[4]

But, whatever their origin and whatever baggage from the past they bring into the present, a score of Protestant "churches" dominate the American scene, each superimposed on the local level on top of rivals and each competing with its neighbors. These churches are no longer enclosed sects, having accepted, at times unwillingly, perhaps, the idea of a church as a *corpus mixtum*. They revolt against Romanist cultural imperialism. How do they solve their vocation of witnessing the Gospel to the world?

To many an observer it seems evident that their danger is surrender *to* the world. I recall a remark of Reinhold Niebuhr: "The great danger of Catholicism is mysticism; the great danger of Protestantism is secularism—and I do not know which is worse." Generalizations usually call for correctives, yet I venture to let the generalization stand. I know that it applies with humiliating force to my own Episcopal Church. The truth of the generalization can be tested by listening to the non-church citizen's appraisal of his neighbors. How are they different from their secular environment, except by the observance of a few remnant ascetic taboos, sporadic attendance on Sundays at a peculiar pious exercise, and an offensive moralistic self-righteousness? The church on the local scene often resembles a club competing with a multitude of rival community sodalities—Rotary and Kiwanis, Parent Teachers Associations, the labor union cell, the American Legion, let alone the Country Club for the Cadillac worshipper. Even within the churches the secularist often notes the same competitive success-worship that he meets in business or sees written large on the society page of his newspaper—the commercialized bazaar, the fashionable wedding, the treadmill of guilds and men's clubs, each spending its energy in encouraging the members to attend the next meeting, why, no one quite knows. On the university and college scene the denominational church club is often the last refuge for the "squares," the social misfits on the campus, its mission important, no doubt, but frequently not differing significantly in kind from that of the fraternity or sorority next door.

Now, it is surely one of the glories of the Reformation churches that they broke down the iron wall between the sacred and the secular and hallowed the layman's vocation in the world. The Church's calling could again be seen, when truly apprehended, not as one of totalitarian rule over the state, but as that of proclaiming the free grace of God (justification by grace through faith) and mediating the unmerited love of God to the world, transforming its environment in place of subjecting it to condemnation or the status of inferiority. Can anyone doubt that when our American churches were thus a true leaven of the Gospel in secular society they went far toward transforming their cultural surroundings? Protestant America is still living on the spiritual capital which the Great Awakening and the evangelical revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries left as a priceless deposit in our midst. One need merely think of the hundreds of church colleges which have moulded the mores of our people. Even the

Kinsey reports cannot obscure the fact that there is a great remnant of God-fearing moral restraint in our land, even several generations after the evangelical revivals have spent their force.

But there was, and is, a flaw somewhere in our American Christianity—possibily in Protestantism itself—which has allowed it to fall victim to "profane" secularization. Of the fact of a large measure of such surrender there can be little doubt. Convincing evidence lies ready to hand in the very college and university life which was, only a short time ago, the seed-plot of Christian social grace and moral discipline. By and large, our colleges and universities are today a mission field and not a witness to the faith of their founders. One keen observer comments on this amazing debacle,[5] contrasting it with the parallel process of secularization taking place in Catholic countries, as follows: "When Jewish and Catholic expressions of the Church in its cultural dimensions decay there is ossification; in Protestantism there is evaporation."

The word evaporation is suggestive and deserves illustration.

If the Church is the Body of Christ elected to witness to a Gospel of grace, something tragic results when this "good news" is transformed into "sad news." Yet this is precisely what has happened in the ministry of the American pulpit. In our seminaries the Gospel may have been rescued out of the bog of humanitarian Liberalism, but the sermons preached in our Christian assemblies are still to a surprising extent in the slough of the Pelagian heresy. Justification by faith has been replaced by justification by works alone. We manicure morals. *Didache* divorced from *kerygma*, the legalisms of sanctification in place of the glorious liberty of the children of God, a few more publicans being turned into pharisees, rivalry in self-righteousness instead of the true fruits of the Spirit, ascetic taboos, proper for life in a monastery or a walled-off sect, perhaps, but now a moralism universalized, a sentimentalized perfectionist imitation of Jesus as First Christian substituted for a dying and rising again with a Savior Christ—the dismal catalog could long continue. Nor are churches like my own, with their liturgical safeguards, exempt from the indictment. And the results are frequently devastating. When sentimentalized and turned into "ideals," this moralism merely flatters the listener and evokes the defense of comparative self-righteousness. When taken seriously, it can result in the neurotic despair or the suppressed rebellion which is the hunting ground of the psychiatrist and turns him often into an enemy of the Church as an authoritarian monster. Not that ethical precepts and disciplines are alien to the life of the people of God. One could defend even some strict sectarian legalisms as proper for Christian witness, as the Roman Catholic cherishes his symbol of "fish on Friday." But when the *ought*ness of the Gospel is divorced from its *is*ness, sentimentalism and secularization are bound to result. The secularists can confront the churches with the question: "What, a little Jesus admiration apart, do you really have that we do not have? Moral idealism? We have it too, and in realistic form, without perfectionist illusions, and with social science at our call."

Concern over our sermons is this writer's stock in trade, and I spare the reader further wailing. I turn to another corruption of the Church.

This is American Protestantism's trust in verbalism and the consequent withering away of the Christian sacraments. Here I may be accused of Anglican (or even Catholic) prejudice. But voices from within Protestantism are also aware of this deflection from the New Testament norm or that envisaged by the Reformers. Ernst Troeltsch speaks of the "dying of the sacraments" on Protestant soil, and Paul Tillich[6] declares that Protestantism has never yet solved the problem of how, in its resistance to the sacerdotally monopolized cultus of Rome, it is to avoid yielding to secularism (Profanitat). "This resistance has attained such dimensions that the Cult has almost become a hidden-in-the-corner affair (Winkelangelegenheit)". European Christianity is guilty on this issue also, but a dying of the sacraments has probably gone farther with us. Verbal proclamation of the Gospel, granted its incomparable power, is after all a report about grace. It must be experienced as a power unto salvation in community before it can be fully known for what it is. How far would Alcoholics Anonymous succeed in its saving ministry if it limited itself to verbal proclamation? *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.* All Christian experience validates this truth, even though we have to leave defining of the limits of the *ecclesia* to God. And Community life demands sacramental forms. We can pay high tribute to the typical American parish or congregation as a mediator of fellowship and acceptance. Our European brethren could profit from seeing it at first hand, since they lack, for the most part, "parish house Christianity." But a flourishing parish house, subject to the poisons of competition and secularization, can empty the sanctuary.

The Body of Christ is something more than genial sociality. It stands under the judgment of holiness. It is called to corporate repentance and a renewal of its corporate unity and power. The Church, as new covenant, is a divine, not a human creation. It must meet as the Body of Christ at the *Lord's* table, as well as at one which *we* spread for one another. Baptism, in the New Testament, is a realistic incorporation into the Body of Christ, a dying and rising again, and not merely a public testimony of a convert's individualised psychological experience. The Lord's Supper, in turn, is an action, a "showing forth of the Lord's death till he come," a corporate self-offering and a becoming one in Christ, and not a mere meditative memorial on the part of individuals attending an occasional and slightly archaic ordinance.

The point of all this—whatever be the delicate involvements of sacramental doctrine—is that the withering away of the sacraments in our American Protestantism, unless checked, can have serious consequences for an understanding of the Church. Our Protestant cultus should not for ever find its meaning in a revolt from Rome. The Catholic cultus does give to the individual worshipper a sense of belonging to the Church of history as well as the here and now, the Church itself part of a given Gospel. When the Catholic listens to prayers and joins in litanies and rites coming out of

the long past of the Communion of Saints, he cannot possibly remain under the illusion that he, with his fellow worshippers, is creating the Church even by ever so genuine a conversion experience or gathered assembly of believers.

I heard a story, in Geneva, during a recent summer, illustrative of my thesis. An American visiting a French Protestant pastor was given a tour of the pastor's church. The American deposited a lit cigar outside the door, the French pastor continuing his smoking in the church itself. When the American expressed shocked surprise, he received the reply: "This is not a church until the Word is being proclaimed to an assembled congregation." A Catholic hearing this story could, to be sure, profit from it in his turn, since there is a truth in the French pastor's paradox. At a Catholic Mass the living congregation is at times merely an embarrassment. Worship could go on very well without it—a corruption of the understanding of the Church which the Liturgical Movement within Rome is trying to uncover and correct. But two wrongs do not make a right.

On this issue of the Protestant cultus, I am tempted to speak for a moment as an Anglican (I shall place us under judgment later). Half of the clergy of the Episcopal Church are converts from other communions, hundreds of them undergoing reordination. They testify to two main enticements—the appeal of the cultus of the Book of Common Prayer and liberation from the tyranny of church polities in which "church" has come to mean an institution motivated by secular power drives. They soon find that the "demonic" is not absent from their new allegiance. But their testimony does deserve recognition in ecumenical discourse. Recovery of Catholic traditions in our Protestant cultus is going on. Some of it, however, fills me with foreboding. Mere prettification of choir vestments, chance prayers and litanies culled out of the past, Latin anthems—this is not catholic worship at all. It is precisely *not* "Common" prayer or the rediscovery of sacramental corporateness. It is very *un*common (un-communal) prayer, often sentimental and creative of a further chasm between ministry and people, which is precisely what cultic recovery should avoid. The clue to cultic reform in our Protestant worship, rescuing it from secularization and from individualism on the part of minister and people alike, lies elsewhere.

In the foregoing paragraph I cited a second indictment voiced by Anglican converts against the communions from which they transferred—namely, that "church" was there experienced as secularized institution; its promotional drives, even when aimed at membership enrolment, turned inward, its goals size and power, the church's hierarchy burdened with administrative technology. The Anglican's self-righteousness needs the humbling of Judgment Day. His drawing a contrast between Catholic and Protestant church order, however, does call attention to a real issue. Institutionalism and order of some sort (Emil Brunner's *Misunderstanding of the Church* to the contrary) is inevitable in the historic life of a corporate body which does not wish to fall victim to disruption or to an anarchic unitarianism of the Third Person of the Trinity, which is what Brunner's

argument seems to picture as norm. But it does make a difference whether the "overseeing" ministry in a church is sacramental and placed under the church's own doctrinal disciplines, or merely labelled doctrinally indifferent and thus an easy victim to secular power drives. An overseer called by his flock "Father-in-God" or Chief Shepherd is less likely to be a symbol of administrative tyranny than one who wields authority on the analogy of a factory manager.

But I present this ecumenically explosive issue merely by way of a parenthesis. The problem of the Church as institutional Leviathan confronts all of us, even though there may be differences in the degree to which it has become demonic and a substitute for the Church as a fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Bishop Berggrav[7] accuses the American churches of being "ingelatinised". We can soften the indictment, but we can profit from it also—as we can from Brunner's placing the modern institutionalized church under the judgment of the New Testament norm. In the volume of the Oxford Conference dealing with the Church,[8] American Methodism is defined by one European observer as "an attempt to combine institutionalism and individualism." The church-name of any one of our denominations could be substituted for Methodism in this description. A vacuum of some sort exists in our American church life between impersonal institution and atomized membership, and nowhere more conspicuously, despite its sacramentalized church order, than in my own Episcopal Church, and indeed in the Catholic tradition generally, though on this issue our Protestant churches seem to have imitated their ancient rival. Because this vacuum is most obvious in Catholicism, the clearest descriptions of it may also be found in contemporary Catholic reform literature. I, at least, know of no more penetrating analysis than that found in *Revolution in a City Parish*, by the French Roman Catholic Abbé Michonneau.

To define the vacuum in a simple sentence or phrase is not easy. Possibly the best approach to an understanding of it is by way of two concrete allusions: (1) What has happened to the Methodist "class meeting", or its correlative in the churches of the Congregational tradition? (2) What is the secret of the appeal of the Pentecostal sects? To put the question in another version: Where does the average member of one of our churches ever experience fellowship on the deep level of shared submission to the judgment of the Lord, or of confession of failure, or of the need for brotherly help in our personal and corporate warfare against sin, the world, and the devil? Where is the Church as Fellowship of the Holy Spirit? An acquaintance of mine who had been permitted to visit a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous and there saw something resembling what an early church *ecclesia* might have been like, came away with the cry: "Show me the quickest way to a whiskey bottle!"

We speak of the Church frequently enough as the Body of Christ. We know it as institution. We know it as a collective of individuals. But where is it as a living body with living cells, as a fellowship intimate enough or personal enough to permit "I-Thou" encounters? St. Paul describes a

first century Christian fellowship as one in which "everyone hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." And he ends his little sermon on "spiritual" fellowship with the plea, "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy and forbid not to speak with tongues" (I Cor. 14: 26, 39). Where have most of us experienced anything like this? We encounter in our churches in its place a ministerial monopolizing of prophesying, of counselling, even at times of witnessing in the social dimensions of a church's life which is little less stifling of the priesthood of all believers than the sacerdotalism of Rome. It is surely significant that hundreds of American Christians, if privileged to attend one of our "new life" centers (Kirkwood, Parishfield) or a summer church conference, experience for the first time the meaning of the Church as Fellowship of the Holy Spirit and its miraculous powers of healing the deep hurts of loneliness and of our depersonalized secular culture. Individualism is caught up in life-in-fellowship, and the "person" is born.

Emil Brunner balances his phobia against institutionalism with a helpful exposition of the problem we face in our time of rediscovering the right relationship between person and community: "You may call the Gospel existential truth, because it cannot be grasped objectively but only in an act of total personal surrender; you may call it community-truth, because it cannot be had outside the community with Christ and His people. . . . It seems to be the task of us Christians of this age to rediscover the unity of truth and community, of truth and existence, in the sacramental existence in Jesus Christ."[9]

The Gospel transformed into moralizing legalisms, justification by grace replaced by justification by works, a secularized competitive parochialism, merely remnant sacramental corporateness, and a demonic institutionalism —these may well be corruptions of the meaning of the Church on the American scene. For some standards of correction our churches could look to their Catholic neighbors; for others to the regional churches of Europe and of the lands of the younger churches; for still others to the norms found in the New Testament itself and recovered in part at the Reformation. But not least they should look to their own past and the little Spirit-empowered fellowships across the street from our pillared shrines which are reduplicating that past, but whose isolation needs redemption in the Great Church of tradition and order, yet without loss of the fruits of the Spirit manifested in their warm personalized fellowship life.

Notes

1. Article "Kirche", in "*Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*".
2. G. Florovsky, "*The Universal Church in God's Design*", p. 43.
3. "*Catholicism*", p. 28.
4. See "*The Unfinished Reformation*".
5. J. Coert Rylaarsdam in "*Christianity and Society*", Autumn, 1953.
6. Essay "Natur und Sakrament" in *Religiöse Verwirklichung*, Berlin, 1929.
7. "*The Christian Century*", September 16, 1953.
8. "*The Church and its Function in Society*" by W. A. Visster t'Hooft and J. H. Oldham, p. 42.
9. "*The Church in the New Social Order*", pp. 27, 28.

Theodicy in the Ancient Near East[1]

RONALD J. WILLIAMS

Why does the way of the wicked prosper?
Why do all who are treacherous thrive? (Jer. 12:1)

THESE words of Jeremiah and their converse, the suffering of the innocent, together with the resultant questioning of divine justice, form the theme of this paper. It was no academic question for Jeremiah; it was wrenched from him by the mental and physical anguish which was his lot as a prophet. Although it might become a subject for learned speculation by the sages, it was nevertheless occasioned by the painful experience of men.

Long before Jeremiah directed his question to God others had posed the same problem in the literature of Mesopotamia. Until recently, only two major works dealing with the theme of theodicy were known: the poem entitled "*I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom*", often called the *Poem of the Righteous Sufferer*, and the *Acrostic Dialogue*, known also as the *Babylonian Theodicy*. These, failing more accurate information, have been regarded as dating from the period between 1200 and 800 B.C.

Another tablet containing a poem similar in content has recently been published.[2] The text is much earlier, however, since it may be ascribed to the reign of Ammiditana (1619–1583 B.C.). Here we may have welcome confirmation of the views of von Soden, amongst others, who has argued that the questioning of traditional religious concepts in Mesopotamia was a result of the catastrophe which overwhelmed the Old Babylonian dynasty, ending in the domination of the land by the Kassites who first appeared about 1675 B.C.[3] In the fragmentary tablet a sufferer intercedes with his god who, moved by his plea, proceeds to heal the afflicted one, saying:

Having been obstructed, the way is open to you;
The path is straight for you and mercy is granted you.
In days to come do not forget your god,
Your creator, when you are prosperous! (Rev., 17–20)

Although the sufferer has declared his innocence, implicit in the words of the deity is the suggestion that he has forgotten his god in times of prosperity.

From other cuneiform sources of the same period we conclude that even before the time of Hammurabi the belief had made its appearance in Mesopotamia that sinners were punished and the righteous rewarded. This is well expressed in the following proverbial sayings culled from the literature:

As for him who slanders and speaks evil,
Shamash awaits him with retribution for it.[4]
Reverence for the gods begets prosperity,
Reverence for the Annunaki increases life.[5]

Soon there followed the corollary that suffering was evidence of sin. Only then do the facts of daily life which are at variance with the basic thesis lead to a questioning of its validity. Thence came the conclusion that the cause for suffering may often be sins committed unwittingly, as the Babylonian penitential psalms continually aver:

> The transgression which I have committed, indeed I do not know;
> The sin which I have perpetrated, indeed I do not know.[6]

In studying the literature which this problem of theodicy has created, we must bear in mind the fact that to the thought of the ancient Near East, determined as it was predominantly by motivations of religion and cult, divine justice never became a matter for philosophical speculation, but rather remained always a religious question. In contradistinction to the occidental world, the problem was stimulated, not by an abstract, speculative interest, but by the concrete circumstances of daily religious living. It was empirical observation that raised doubts as to divine justice.

The second work of Akkadian literature to be noted is the poem which the ancients knew as "*I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom.*"[7] Cast in the form of a monologue, it runs to four tablets. The central figure, originally a man of wealth and position, appears now as does Job in the Hebrew counterpart, as a man bereft of riches and power, and afflicted with a loathsome disease. Neither prayer nor sacrifice, priest nor magician can afford him relief:

> Misfortune is multiplied; I cannot find justice.
> I cried to the god, but he would not look at me;
> I prayed to the goddess, but she would not raise her head.
> The seer could not determine my future by divination;
> The oracle-priest could not elucidate my case through sacrifice.
> (ii. 3–7)

All his past piety has counted for nought:

> Like one who did not establish a libation for the god,
> Nor remember the goddess at meals;
> Who did not avert his face, nor was filled with humility,
> From whose mouth prayer and supplication were absent;
> Who discarded the god's day, neglected the festival,
> Who became careless, ignoring their rites;
> Who did not teach his people reverence and veneration,
> Not remembering his god, although eating his food,
> Forsaking his goddess and not bringing an offering;
> Like one who became important and forgot his master,
> Taking the weighty oath of his god lightly, I am disdained.
> Yet it was I who took thought for prayer and supplication,
> Supplication being my practice, sacrifice my rule;
> The day of reverencing the gods was my delight,
> The day of homage for the goddess was wealth and riches.
> (ii. 12–26)

He is constrained to conclude that the will of the gods is inscrutable, and that divine justice does not parallel its human counterpart:

What is acceptable to oneself is abominable to the god,
What is despicable in his mind is acceptable to his god.
Who understands the will of the gods in heaven?
Who comprehends the counsel of the underworld gods?
Where has mankind understood the way of a god? (ii. 34–38)

The remainder of the second tablet is occupied with describing the symptoms of his disease in the most vivid detail. Then, in the third and fourth tablets, when all hope is abandoned, the god Marduk unexpectedly intervenes and in the course of three dreams health is restored to the afflicted one who then makes his way joyfully through the twelve gates of Babylon to the temple of Marduk, where he offers thanksgiving for his deliverance. Here we have no attempt to provide a solution for the problem of the inexplicable and undeserved suffering of a pious man.

The third Babylonian text is a poem of twenty-seven strophes of eleven lines each, arranged in the form of an acrostic.[8] Unlike the preceding work, it is a dialogue, the two participants speaking in alternate strophes. The first speaker has experienced nothing but misfortune in his life and hence denies the existence of divine justice. He describes how he was left an orphan at an early age, to which his pious friend replies that death is the common lot of all men. Piety, however, is the guarantee of a happy life:

He who looks on the face of the god possesses a guardian deity;
The anxious man, who reverences the goddess, heaps up abundance.
(21 f.)

He goes further, and suggests a reason for the suffering of his friend: the lack of piety as demonstrated by his denunciation of the just rule of the gods. This, however, does not satisfy the sufferer, for he sees no relationship between piety and material success. Drawing on the animal world as well as human society for his examples, he declares:

The wild ass, which has uttered [defiance(?)],
Did it give ear [to] the ancient things, the counsel of the god?
The fierce lion, which has repeatedly eaten the best of the flesh,
Did it bring its incense-offerings to appease the wrath of the goddess?
Did the possessor of riches, who has multiplied wealth, really
Allot precious electron to Mami?
Have I withheld food-offerings? I prayed to the god,
I dedicated the offerings of the goddess, but my word [was in vain(?)].
(48–55)

This, his friend asserts, is a shallow view; in the end retribution overtakes them:

Look at the [well-]formed wild ass on the [steppe(?)],
He who has trampled the produce of the fields! An arrow comes back to him.
The enemy of the beasts, the lion to which you referred, look at him now!
(Because of) the wrong which the lion has done a pit stands open for him.

The one who is endowed with wealth, the rich man who has heaped up possessions,
The prince burns him up in the fire before his appointed time.
Did you wish to follow the course which these have pursued?
(Rather) seek continually the gracious mercy of the god!
(59–66)

The sufferer refuses to be convinced, but his friend replies by stressing the inscrutability of divine justice:

The plans of the gods are as [inscrutable(?)] as the midst of the heavens,
The utterance of the god or goddess is not comprehended.
(82 f.)

He further points out how zealously *he* served the gods. Now completely disillusioned, the sufferer declares that he will forsake human society and live as a vagabond and a brigand. His orthodox friend is aghast at the suggestion, but the rebel continues to point out the injustices in society:

The son of the needy and naked (now) puts on [fine clothes(?)];
He who used to dine on vegetables (now) [eats] a noble's banquet;
The son of the honoured and rich (now) [feeds on] the carob;
The possessor of wealth is brought low . . . (182, 185–187)[9]

Education—all the secret lore of the scribe to which he applied himself—was of no avail to bring prosperity to the sufferer. But his pious friend still rings the changes on his conventional belief:

As for him who bears the god's yoke, though scanty, his food is sure.
Search continually for the favourable wind of the gods,
And what you have lost this year you will replace in a moment.
(240–242)

The sceptic turns again to the theme of the prosperity of the wicked, a subject, incidentally, which is not mentioned in either of the preceding poems:

Men extol the word of the renowned, who is experienced in murder,
While they despise the weakling who has done no harm;
They justify the wicked to whom [justice(?)] is taboo,
While they drive out the just man who is mindful of the god's will;
They fill the treasure-house of the violent with costly plating,
While the storehouse of the powerless they empty of food;
They strengthen the mighty whose whole being is sin,
While they destroy the lowly and trample down the weak.
(267–274)

But his orthodox companion shows that conventional religion has an answer for this, too, for the gods at creation,

Having bestowed upon men complicated speech,
Bestowed upon them falsehoods and untruths for ever.
As for a rich man, one speaks glowingly of his prosperity:
"He is a king; riches accompany him!"
While the weak man one treats as if he were evil as a thief.
(279–283)

That is to say, with the gift of the power of speech, the gods doomed man to falsehood, to a mistaken view of life. This seems to satisfy our sceptical friend, for at this point he is moved to accept the orthodox view and, humbling himself before the gods, he cries:

> May Ninurta who cast me off establish aid!
> May the goddess who [afflicted me] have mercy!
> (295 f.)

We note that in contrast to the other two poems there is here no intervention by the gods. The aim of this poet is rather to effect a psychological conversion.

When we turn to Egyptian literature, we seek in vain for any discussion of theodicy. The vivid descriptions of the social revolution of the First Intermediate Period (2280–2050 B.C.) contained in the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*[10] or the *Suicide*[11] contain no attack on the divine government, but rather accuse men of perverting *Maʿat*, the divinely ordained order. *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*,[12] also from the same period, deals to be sure with the subject of social justice, but no blame is attached to the gods. Most nearly akin to a discussion of the problem is the *Teaching of Amenemhet*,[13] a piece of political propaganda composed by the scribe Kheti for Senwosret I after the assassination of his father Amenemhet I, the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty. In the words placed in the mouth of the deceased king there is indeed something of a revolt against the injustice of the suffering of a righteous man. But there is a significant difference: the fault is man's, not God's! Even this document, therefore, cannot be regarded in any sense as a questioning of theodicy.

Surely there must be some reason for this strange omission in the vast body of Egyptian literary remains, especially when the theme is such a live issue in the Akkadian and Hebrew sources. Two factors may have been responsible for this state of affairs. First of all, we note the fact that in Western Asia, in the words of Jacobsen, "justice as right rather than justice as favor seems to have become the general conception."[14] It was in this area that the great law codes were produced. Now, that Egypt had laws, indeed that written formulations of law were in existence there, no one would deny. But these laws were secret, and access to them could be gained only by the proper authorities. They were the will of the king, and only as he saw fit was justice dispensed to his subjects. In Mesopotamia, on the other hand, the laws were displayed in public, available to all men, that they might know their rights. Even the king must conform to them; why not, then, the gods also?

The second reason is the characteristic Egyptian belief in immortality. When rewards and punishments could be projected into a future life, the problem of seeming injustice in this life was not so vital a concern. Since in Mesopotamia and Palestine no such after-life was envisaged, the problem remained a real one until a comparable belief arose. It is significant, for

instance, that the *Wisdom of Solomon*, with its developed doctrine of immortality, ignores the problem, while Ben Sira, who emphatically repudiates any idea of immortality, is constrained to deal with it, emphasizing either the disciplinary value of suffering (32:14) or else affirming that the inequality is redressed at death, or at least that the reward is to be found in one's children (11:26–28).

We turn, then, to Hebrew literature. Here we find that the problem of theodicy is relatively late. It makes its appearance first as the result of Assyrian domination and the subsequent Babylonian Exile. It gained cogency from the fact that since the eighth century, accompanying the breakdown of the social organization, the clan and family groupings, in the spheres of religion and law the individual and his life step to the foreground.[15] Rewards and punishments could no longer be bestowed on the community as a whole; the consequences of piety or sin must be visited on the lives of individuals.

We can see this clearly in the prophetic literature. Here we have the doctrine of retribution for evil—doom for all, though gradually this is modified to allow the escape of a righteous remnant. Indeed, the evil may be visited upon generations yet unborn. Yahweh was a jealous God, punishing children for the sins of their fathers to the third or fourth generation of those who hate him (Deut. 5:9). The same doctrine, coupled with its obverse, the rewarding of good, is seen in the exilic historiography, governed as it was by the Deuteronomic view that divine justice may be demonstrated in the course of the nation's history. It may be, then, that the suffering of the righteous is the result of the sin of an ancestor.

It was Ezekiel who proclaimed the doctrine that rewards and punishments are apportioned justly to the individual according as he be righteous or wicked (ch. 18). This is in keeping with the rise of individualism to which we have already referred. Such a view now becomes axiomatic and is enshrined, as in Mesopotamia, in the popular speech, in the short, pithy sayings, many of which are preserved in the Book of Proverbs:

> No harm befalls the righteous,
> But the wicked are full of trouble. (12:21)
> Calamity dogs sinners,
> But well-being rewards the righteous. (13:21)

This view is likewise reflected in the historical writings of the later Chronicler, where retribution and reward are now seen to be meted out during the life of each king individually. It is most instructive to examine the parallel accounts in the earlier and later histories with this fact in mind.

After Jeremiah's heart-rending query with which this paper began, many voices were raised in protest at the patent falsity of such an assumption. Yet champions of the orthodox position were not lacking. Three psalms are devoted to the subject. The first is Psalm 37, an alphabetic acrostic poem of twenty-two couplets. The argument is pure orthodoxy: in spite of all

appearances, the wicked who in their prosperity and power have oppressed the righteous will soon be done away with, while the pious will prosper:

> Fret not yourself because of evildoers,
> Be not incensed because of wrongdoers,
> For they will quickly wither like grass,
> And fade away like the green herb. (vv. 1 f.)
>
> I have been young, and now am old,
> But I have not seen the righteous forsaken;
> For those whom he blesses shall possess the land,
> But those whom he curses shall be cut off.
> (vv. 25, 22)[16]
> I saw the wicked exultant,
> Towering aloft like the cedars of Lebanon;
> I passed by and lo, he was no more!
> When I sought him he was not to be found.
> (vv. 35 f.)[17]

The same erroneous view is shared by the author of Psalm 49. This poem of three quatrains is a scathing denunciation of the wealthy:

> Why should I fear in days of trouble,
> When the guilt of my persecutors surrounds me—
> Those who trust in their wealth,
> And boast of the abundance of their riches?
> Alas! No man can buy himself off,
> Nor pay a ransom to God,
> That he may live for ever and ever,
> Never seeing the pit. (vv. 2–10)[18]

Note the repudiation of any idea of immortality. A later glossator penned a marginal note in prose (v. 9):

> The ransom of his life is too costly; he must cease
> from that for ever![19]

The poem continues:

> This is the fate of the self-confident,
> The end of those who boast with their lips;
> Like sheep they have been appointed to Sheol,
> Death shepherds them and rules them,
> In the grave is their resting-place,
> In the midst of Sheol is their dwelling.
> Fear not when a man grows rich,
> When the glory of his house increases.
> (vv. 14–17)[20]

Again a later, pious reader, who was offended by this denial of immortality and determined to proclaim his own assurance, wrote another prose note:

> Yet God will ransom my soul from the power of
> Sheol, for he will take me! (v. 16).

The poem concludes:

Truly, when he dies he will take nothing away,
His glory will not go down after him;
Though while he lives he congratulates himself:
"Men praise you because it goes well with you,"
He will go to the generation of his fathers,
And will nevermore see light!
Man is (but) an unreasoning brute,
He is like the beasts that perish! (vv. 18–21)[21]

The burden of the poet, then, is merely that the wicked "can't take it with them!"

In Psalm 73, however, we breathe a rarer atmosphere. In this poem of eight triads the writer abandons the superficiality of the other poets. He is equally convinced of the justice of God, but seeks with more success to reconcile the discordant facts of experience:

Truly God is good to the upright,
The Lord to the pure in heart!
My feet had almost given way,
My steps had well nigh slipped;
For I was incensed at < the wealth of > the boasters,
As I beheld the prosperity of the wicked.
(vv. 1–3)[22]

He is driven to question the value of his piety:

Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure,
And washed my hands in innocence!
I have been smitten all day,
And chastening was mine every morning;
I thought, "I will thus relate,
'Thou hast been false to the generation of thy children!'"
(vv. 13–15)[23]

But on entering the sanctuary the psalmist reaches a new pinnacle of faith:

As a dream after awakening, they are no more;
When thou arousest, thou wilt disregard their forms;
But I, I am with thee continually,
Thou hast grasped me by thy right hand,
With thy counsel thou leadest me after thee,
Taking me by the hand.

Whom have I in the heavens < but thee > ?
I have no delight on earth save thee;
My flesh and my heart fail,
But God is my portion eternally;
For lo, those far from thee will perish,
Thou destroyest all who are apostates from thee.
(vv. 20, 23–27)[24]

The minutiae of textual criticism have been banished to the footnotes. Suffice it to say that I do not believe that the Hebrew text supports the interpretation that our writer is putting forth a doctrine of immortality. Rather do I regard him as speaking of a spiritual fellowship with God in this life that is full compensation for all the suffering he may have encountered.

We must hasten on, finally, to the greatest of all expositions of theodicy, the Book of Job. That the book as we have it is a complete unity would be maintained by few scholars today. We recognize the existence of an old prose folk-tale, preserved in the first two chapters. With this may perhaps be associated the prose epilogue (42:7–16). Whether the author of the Dialogue was himself responsible for prefacing his poem with this ancient account or not, we may rest assured that he assumed on the part of his readers a knowledge of some such story. The solution of the problem which is offered by this prose tale is, of course, that the suffering which befell Job was a test of his integrity, to demonstrate the fact of disinterested piety.

The next section which is denied to the original poetic work by the majority of scholars is that containing the Speeches of Elihu (chs. 32–37). The reasons for this are well known and need not delay us now.[25] The same measure of agreement will not be found, however, with regard to the Yahweh Speeches (chs. 38–42:6). Here I must side with those scholars who regard this section too as a later addition. It presents a very different Job from the figure delineated in the Dialogue. Whereas in the latter Job maintains his integrity to the bitter end, we see him in the Yahweh Speeches repenting "in dust and ashes;" while in the Dialogue Job longs to meet God in open debate, when he does finally stand before his Maker in these speeches, there is no hint of an argument. Indeed, the central problem of the Dialogue is left untouched. We are offered in these chapters nothing less than a detailed and eloquent exposition of the very point of view advanced by Job's friends: God is almighty and frail man must humbly submit to his will. Then, when all this has been said, Yahweh turns to Eliphaz and says, "My anger is kindled against you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth about me as my servant Job has" (42:7)! What amazing logic this is, indeed! Surely this is unworthy of so daring and skilled a poet as the author of the Dialogue.

We are left, then, with the Dialogue itself. And even here some spurious material is to be found. Chapter 28, that magnificent hymn in praise of Wisdom, is generally regarded as a later addition. But I submit that chapters 29–31, as more than one scholar has maintained, are likewise secondary. Here Job is not a desert sheikh, but a city-dweller of noble estate. The author has sought to make Job conform to traditional religious thinking and forsake completely his original position. Here "the keen and questioning seeker of the early chapters", as Dr. Bovey has observed, "is presented to us as an unattractive snob, well satisfied with his own good works."[26]

Turning to the Dialogue, we find Eliphaz opening the debate (ch. 4) by describing the mystical vision by which he received a special revelation of the transcendence of God. Job reports in chapters 9 and 10 that if God be so omnipotent man is posed with a problem: "I know quite well that this is so—but how can mortal man be righteous with God?" (9:2). For Job the doctrine of God's supreme power, far from being an answer, creates a problem. If the view of the friends be right, then God is merely omnipotent Caprice:

> It is all one—therefore I say
> He destroys both the blameless and the wicked;
> If his scourge slays instantly,
> He mocks at the despair of the innocent;
> The earth is delivered into the power of the wicked,
> As he covers the faces of its judges. (9:22–24)[27]

It is at this point in the argument that Job hits on the bold idea that if he could meet God face to face and argue his case with him he might be vindicated. This forces him to the recognition of the necessity for an impartial third party to the debate, if God's omnipotence is not to crush him:

> If only there were an umpire between us,
> That he might lay his hand on us both!
> That he might turn aside his rod from upon me,
> And that fear of him might not terrify me;
> That I might speak and not fear him,
> For I am not so with myself. (9:33–35)[28]

In his next speech (chs. 12–14) Job continues to insist that God is capricious. Defiantly he challenges God:

> Only two things do not do to me—
> Then I will not hide myself from thee:
> Remove thy hand from upon me,
> And let not the dread of thee terrify me!
> Then call, and I will answer;
> Or let me speak, and do thou reply to me. (13:20–23)

But he is bewildered when no reply is forthcoming. His next speech, in reply to Eliphaz (chs. 16–17), returns to the concept of a third party:

> O earth, cover not my blood,
> That there be no place for my cry!
> Even now my witness is in the heavens,
> He who testifies for me is on high.
>
> My intermediary approaches God,
> Before him my envoy intercedes,
> That he might defend a man with God,
> Like a man for his friend. (16:18–21)[29]

By a natural transition the umpire or judge has become an advocate—counsel for the defence!

So we come to the difficult passage in Job's next speech (ch. 19) in

which he returns to the concept of the third party, the intermediary. Some years ago I ventured to suggest the original form of these verses, since which time I have been gratified to discover that I was anticipated in the main lines of this reconstruction by Mowinckel, who also recognizes in the *gō'ēl* the third party of chapters 9 and 16, and not God himself.[30] Job's triumphant affirmation runs:

> I know that my vindicator lives,
> He who testifies for me will stand upon the dust;
> Afterwards he will raise me up as my witness,
> My emancipator will see God. (19:25 f.)[31]

To Prof. W. A. Irwin must go the credit for having observed the value of the first Elihu speech (chs. 32–33) for reconstructing the mutilated conclusion of the Dialogue.[32] Here we encounter the *mēlīṣ*, or intermediary (33:23), and we note how this figure is described as the superhuman agent of Job's subsequent restoration. We recall too that it is likewise a heavenly messenger despatched by the god Marduk through whom comes the restoration of the afflicted one in the Babylonian *Poem of the Righteous Sufferer.*

In these words of Job we have an echo of a passage from the Ugaritic Baal epic, well known to Hebrew writers:

> In a dream, O gracious one, compassionate El,
> In a vision, creator of creatures,
> The heavens rained oil,
> The valleys ran with honey;
> So I know that triumphant Baal lives,
> That the prince, lord of the earth, exists![33]

The author of the Dialogue conceives of the ancient Baal-Hadad of earlier Canaanite religion as one of the divine or semi-divine members of the heavenly conclave or council which is mentioned in Psalm 82:1:[34]

> God, taking his stand in the divine assembly,
> Gives judgment in the midst of the gods.

To this august body, consisting of "divine beings" (Job 1:6, 2:1) or "holy ones" (Ps. 89:6, 8), belonged the Satan of the Prologue, as well as the evil spirit referred to in I Kings 22:21. There is here, of course, no suggestion of polytheism. The incorporation of earlier deities into the angelic hierarchy is not without parallel elsewhere.

Who better than Baal, one who had himself suffered, but through whose passion there came fertility and life for men, could serve as the intermediary for whom Job longed? It was this message which commanded such a following in the Mystery Religions of the Greco-Roman world and which presents itself as a striking precursor of the Christian gospel of Jesus, the suffering and triumphant Saviour. In the light of so heterodox a concept, it is not difficult to understand why the crucial passages in chapters 16 and 19 have been intentionally mutilated, or why the text of chapters 25–27

has been left in such hopeless disorder by the destruction of the original conclusion of the Dialogue.

Space forbids us to consider in detail one aspect of the problem which is well nigh peculiar to Hebrew literature. This is the concept of vicarious suffering which finds its noblest expression in the Servant Songs of the unknown prophet whose writings are preserved in the later chapters of the Book of Isaiah. The fact that suffering is woven into the very fabric of our universe and that it may be instrumental in bringing about God's gracious purpose for his people, reaches its ultimate manifestation in the Cross of Calvary.

Notes

1. The Presidential Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies on May 21, 1953, at Queen's Theological College, Kingston, Ont.

2. J. Nougayrol, "Une version ancienne du 'Juste souffrant' ", *Revue Biblique*, 59 (1952), 239–250.

3. W. von Soden, "Religion und Sittlichkeit nach den Anschauungen der Babylonier", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 89 (1935), 143 ff. A still earlier discussion of theodicy has recently been published by S. N. Kramer, " 'Man and His God': a Sumerian Variation on the 'Job' Motif", *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, 3 (1955), 170 ff.

4. *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 38 (1916), 136, ll. 29 f.

5. R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*, VI (London, 1902), No. 614, rev. 8 f.

6. H. C. Rawlinson, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, IV (London, 1891), p. 10, obv. 42–45.

7. *Babyloniaca*, 7 (1923), 131 ff.; J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, 1950) [abv. *ANET*], pp. 434 ff.; see now *Anatolian Studies*, 4 (1954), 65 ff.

8. B. Landsberger, "Die babylonische Theodizee", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, 43 (1936), 32 ff.; *ANET*, pp. 439 ff.

9. Cf. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, 6 (1952), 3 f.

10. *ANET*, pp. 441 ff.

11. *ANET*, pp. 405 ff.

12. *ANET*, pp. 407 ff.

13. *ANET*, pp. 418 f.

14. H. Frankfort et al., *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* (Chicago, 1946), p. 208.

15. Cf. A. Causse, *Du groupe ethnique à la communauté religieuse* (Paris, 1937).

16. Del. v. 25c as a gloss.

17. Read with Gk. *'allīṣ* and *miṭ'allê ḳĕ'ɛrɛz hal-lĕbōnōn* and *wō-'ɛ'ĕḇor*.

18. In v. 8 del. *pōḏō* as dittography; for *'ōḥ*, "alas!" cf. Ezek. 6: 11, 21: 20.

19. Read *napšô* with Gk.

20. In v. 14 read *'aḥărītōm* with Targ.

21. In v. 20 read *yōḇô* and *yir'ê* with Gk. and Syr.

22. In v. 1 read *yōšōr* and del. *'ēl* (dittography); at the end read *'<d>ny* for *wa'ănī* of v. 2. In v. 3 perhaps insert *ḥêl* after prep. (haplography).

23. In v. 14 read *wĕṭôḳaḥaṭ lī* (haplography). In v. 15 del. *'im* (dittography) which is impossible in a past unreal condition (cf. Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Hebrew Grammar* [Oxford, 1898], § 159m); read also *bō gaḏṭō* with some Gk. MSS as an intentional correction to remove a blasphemous statement; read *kĕmō-hēnnō* with Gk. and Vulg.

24. Vv. 21 f. belong after v. 16. In v. 20 for *'ăḏōnōy* read *'ênōm*, and for *bō'īr* read *bĕ'ūrĕḵō* (Gk. and Vulg. rd. suffix). In v. 24 *kōḇōḏ* cannot mean "to glory," but only

"gloriously" (as Gk. and Vulg.); however, the original text was probably *'aḥărê<u>k</u>ō bĕyō<u>d</u>*. In v. 25 some such word as *zūlōṯĕkō* was probably lost. In v. 26 del. *ṣūr lĕ<u>b</u>ō<u>b</u>ī* as a variant or gloss.

25. For a brief and authoritative introduction to these problems see Samuel Terrien's commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible*, III (New York, 1954), pp. 877 ff.

26. *Hibbert Journal*, 36 (1937/8), 360.

27. Del. v. 24c as a gloss.

28. In v. 33 for *lô* read *lū* with 13 MSS, Gk. and Syr.

29. The original text of vv. 20 f. was discussed by the writer in a paper read to the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies in May, 1946, when the following tentative reconstruction was offered for v. 20: *mĕlīṣī yigga' 'el-'ĕlōăh, ūlĕpōnōw yĕpallel ṣīrī*.

30. S. Mowinckel, "Hiobs gō'ēl und Zeuge im Himmel", *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 41 (1925), 207 ff.; so also Irwin (cf. fn. 32) and most recently Terrien, *op. cit.*

31. The text of these vv. was examined by the writer in a paper to the same Society in May, 1952. For *'aḥărōn* in v. 25 read *šōhă<u>d</u>ī* (cf. 16: 19b), and in v. 26 read *'ē<u>d</u>ī* (cf. 16: 19a) *yizqoṗ 'ōṯī, ūmĕššōrī yeḥĕzê*; note that Gk. read *ūmiššadday* for *ūmibbĕššōrī* (Κύριος is likewise a translation of *šadday* in 6: 14, 22: 3, 26), giving us the consonantal text for *ūmĕššōrī*, since *d* and *r* are identical in the early script.

32. *Journal of Religion*, 17 (1937), 37 ff.; cf. also his valuable article *ibid.*, 13 (1933), 150 ff.

33. *ANET*, p. 140; C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Handbook*, II (Rome, 1947), text 49, iii, 4–9.

34. Cf. also Ps. 89: 6, 8; Jer. 23: 18; Job 15: 8.

The Active Character of Calvinism

R. C. CHALMERS

FEW people have so stamped their name upon the world as Calvin",[1] writes A. Mitchell Hunter, and in this opinion he is supported by a vast number of those best qualified to speak. Few would dispute his profound influence on Western civilization. His sway over the minds and hearts of men and nations arises from what has been called "the active character of Calvinism."[2] Calvin let loose not only spiritual forces which reformed the Church, but also moral power which transformed the world. "Calvin held an essentially activist view of human life. . . . He vigorously attacked the so-called contemplative life which had not only become an excuse for idleness, but cast a slur upon the ordinary life and work of men."[3] Where, then, is the secret of "the active character of Calvinism" to be found?

I

The source of this activist view is the fact that he lived for the glory of God who is revealed in Jesus Christ. Calvin has a better right than Spinoza to be called "the God-intoxicated man." He believed that God the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer—and none other—is to be worshipped and served. God reigned supreme, and man's joy and freedom were to be found in accepting His sovereign dominion over all things. "The perfection of a happy life consists in the knowledge of God."[4] Since man has been brought into existence by God his responsibility is to serve his Maker. This he does by living for God's glory, through faith, which is also God's gift. By faith man understands God's will for him and by faith also he is assured of the ultimate triumph of that will, so that he is able to stand in the evil day.

The God of the Bible, according to Calvin, is an active God. He is the living Lord who is ever at work renewing and restoring His creation. He is not the God of the *status quo*. He is the God of the end (*telos*). He does not rest in some quiet heaven, aloof from all that He has made. Rather, by the outreach of His active will, He is ever perfecting that which He has created. Accordingly, faith in such a Deity cannot be conceived in static terms. Faith in God is dynamic. It inspires and directs man to do God's will. If God is at work transforming the world, so must the believer be, in daily obedience to this active God Whom he serves.

Calvin was undoubtedly one of the world's great humanitarians. He showed his humanitarian spirit in his social leadership at Geneva. Some have described him as the father of the welfare state. But, however far we may go in paying tribute to the man and his influence, we must remember that Calvin's humanitarianism was not inspired, in the first instance, by a love of man but by obedience to God's will. "There can never be any human brotherhood apart from God", wrote Calvin. "Some may say, 'we

are all of the same country, we are all children of the same city'. This is the way they think to establish brotherhood. . . . by saying so, wicked men think to be cousins and brothers."[5] No! It is not thus that humanitarianism is born and endures, according to Calvin. Brotherhood is not from below; it is from above. Its motivation is not horizontal but vertical. Believers are commanded to do good to all men because God's image is stamped on every man. "We must not reflect on the wickedness of men, but contemplate the divine image in them. This divine image, by its beauty, dignity, and glory, eclipses the faults of men, and allures us to embrace them in the arms of love."[6] Calvinistic activism, therefore, in so far as it issues in humanitarianism, is motivated by the active will of God.

Man's whole life in regarded dynamically in Calvinism. Everything rests upon and is motivated by the "moving strength" of God. "We have to consider how we ought to glorify God in all our life, and hereby see also to what end we are created and why we live", wrote Calvin.[7] Moreover, man has no independent life in the strict sense of the term, according to Calvin's teaching. The image of God in man is not a natural endowment but a spiritual gift, a reflection of the divine Word, which "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). Only in the relationship of living faith can this image be maintained. It is thus by strenuous work, in obedience to God's will, that the image is truly reflected in man.

II

"The active character of Calvinism" is grounded not only in faith in an active God, but also in the biblical doctrine of election. Calvin believed that the Christian was elected by God to "lead a holy and blameless life. If the object of election be holiness of life, it should rather awaken and stimulate us to a cheerful practice of it, than be used as a pretext for slothfulness."[8] Holiness is thus conceived in dynamic terms. The man of God must strive to make his election sure by acts of love.

This election, however, was not only to a holy and blameless life, but in the sovereign purpose of God to specific tasks. Why God chooses some individuals and peoples and not others is a mystery. But that He does elect, or select, certain people for special responsibilities is beyond doubt.

When a man believes that God has chosen him for some special work he has, in some degree, already won the victory. He can face obstacles knowing that he is an instrument in the hands of God. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31), cried St. Paul, in one of the best biblical passages on election. Calvinism, instead of leading to fatalism, as some might suppose, has "put salt and iron into human life. . . . It taught . . . a profound sense of the greatness of God, so that they who feared Him were little troubled with earthly fears."[9]

Involved, therefore, in the doctrine of election was Calvin's teaching about vocation or calling. God calls a man to labor for Him. "The Lord commands every one of us, in all the actions of life, to regard his vocation,"

writes Calvin. "Every individual's line of life . . . is, as it were, a post assigned him by the Lord, that he may not wander about in uncertainty all his days. . . . The magistrate will execute his office with greater pleasure, the father of a family will confine himself to his duty with more satisfaction, and all, in their respective spheres of life, will bear and surmount the inconveniences, cares, disappointments, and anxieties which befall them, when they shall be persuaded that every individual has his burden laid upon him by God. Hence also will arise peculiar consolation, since there will be no employment so mean and sordid (provided we follow our vocation) as not to appear truly respectable, and be deemed highly important in the sight of God."[10]

If, then, Christians are to live and work as "ever in their great Taskmaster's eye", idleness must be acounted a very grave sin. "From the Calvinistic point of view laziness is the most dangerous vice."[11] Laziness not only injures the soul's growth and turns a man into a social parasite; even more it is dishonoring to God. Slothfulness robs God of that which is His rightful due—the service of His creatures, made in His image. Calvinism teaches that labor is not optional; it is imperative. Man must work "while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work" (John 9:4).

Such a life demands self-denial. There is a holy asceticism that the Christian must practise. Such an asceticism does not require a man to forsake the world but to live in it as if he were not bound to it , except in service. This means that the Christian should seek not his own things "but those which are agreeable to the will of the Lord, and conducive to the promotion of His glory."[12] "All whom the Lord has chosen and honoured with admission into the society of saints, ought to prepare themselves for a life, hard, laborious and unquiet."[13] Who is sufficient for this self-discipline? Only the man who has been called by God and lives in His grace.

The ethical consequences of living for God's glory are, therefore, very apparent in the life of the individual. They are even more striking in their social outreach.

Since God is the Lord of all life, every phase of society must be brought into captivity to Christ. Communal life must be ordered in a manner that will show forth His glory. A Christian civilization, a *corpus Christianum*, must be the social goal of the people of God. The State and all the concerns of man's common, everyday world must be brought into obedience to God. The State as well as the Church is "under God." The functions of the State are different from those of the Church, but both State and Church must respect the moral laws of God. Thus the position of the magistrate, teacher, ruler, or public officer, as well as the preacher, is to be held in high esteem. "The church should be the conscience of the state, the state the organ of an evangelized conscience. As a reminder of the spirit that should infuse all life, private and public, Calvin had the letters I H S carved or stamped on all public buildings, coins, and standards in Geneva."[14]

Furthermore, Calvinism declares that we must not make any sharp division between the realms of the secular and the sacred, since God is the Lord of both realms. The distinction between the secular and the sacred can remain, but there is no place in Calvin's teaching for an ethical dualism. The Christian is to serve God in the shop and the home as well as in the Church. Calvin himself devoted a large amount of time to secular affairs. Troeltsch tells us that Calvin "had a great deal to do with questions of industrial production. . . . It was at Calvin's instigation that, with the aid of the state loan, the manufacture of cloth and velvet was introduced into Geneva as a home industry, in order to give work to the poor and unemployed. Later on . . . the manufacture of watches was introduced with the same aim. . . . his letters, indeed, deal constantly with the interests of finance, trade, and industry."[15]

On this subject of vocation we must note that Calvinism has met with some criticism. Troeltsch and Tawney point out that there is an intimate relationship between Calvinism and the growth of Capitalism. Tawney declares that Calvinism "is perhaps the first systematic body of religious teaching which can be said to recognize and applaud the economic virtues",[16] thus giving rise to a combination of religious zeal and practical shrewdness, which together with Calvin's "qualified indulgence to interest" or usury, smoothed the way for the rise of Capitalism. Max Weber goes even further and charges Calvinism with the main responsibility for fostering an unbridled *laissez-faire* Capitalism, and turning greed for gain into a virtue.[17]

Whatever truth there may be in these criticisms—and there is some—we must not overrate them. As Tawney points out,[18] Weber over-simplifies the development of Capitalism in ascribing the main responsibility to Calvinism. There were other factors in sixteenth-century Europe—economic, political and technological—which even more than Calvinism abetted the rise of *laissez-faire* business enterprise. In fact, Capitalism had made considerable progress before Calvinism appeared on the scene.

Furthermore, Calvin did not foresee such an economic and social order as has arisen more recently in Western civilization, in which whole spheres of man's work and conduct have been divorced from religious sanctions; he is not to be held responsible for those developments which have come about through the entire disregard of the religious basis which to him was fundamental. Calvinistic discipline has no place for indulgence in luxuries or for the acquisition of wealth as a means to selfish personal power. A "vulgarized Calvinism" that has lost its sense of responsibility is not the Calvinism propounded by the prophet of Geneva.

Whatever weaknesses, therefore, we may discover in "the active character of Calvinism" and whatever questionable trends in society may be traced, in part, to Calvin's influence, we must not overlook the more positive and constructive aspects of his teaching. "Calvinism was an active and radical force", writes Tawney.[19] "It was a creed which sought, not merely to purify

the individual, but to reconstruct church and state, and to renew society by penetrating every department of life, public as well as private, with the influence of religion." In spite of its faults Calvinism sought to carry out this task of purification, reconstruction and renewal with one aim in mind—the glory of God.

III

What does this "active character of Calvinism" imply for the Church in our time?

Because many of those who laid the foundations of national life in North America were the spiritual heirs of Geneva, this continent inherited a large share of the activist influence that stemmed from Calvinism. Unfortunately this spirit was deflected from spiritual to material ends under the commingled influences that went to form the culture of America, the pioneering, for example, which subdued the wilderness, and others which looked to man rather than God. (How the great defection took place is a subject into which we cannot here enter.) Thus we are faced now with an activism that has fallen from its high estate. It lacks spiritual motivation because it it not rooted in the divine. It lacks a transcendent purpose because it has no eternal goal. It has become a mere busyness, the activism of the extrovert that issues in superficial and trivial living.

No wonder, then, that Church life on this continent has been under a cloud of late, because of its involvement in this non-religious activism. There is no denying the substantial truth of much of the criticism directed against Church activism in recent years, especially that from abroad. Too often the life and work of our churches have been lacking in gospel motivation and purpose. W. L. Sperry writes that the religion of the average American Protestant is that of "doing good"; "more especially that sort of good that involves going about."[20]

In penitence we must confess that Protestantism on this continent has often overlooked its first responsibility: to witness to the truth of God in Christ and the relevance of this truth for all of life. Such a witness is something other than giving a pietistic presentation of the latest political panacea for the world's ills. We have often lost sight of the truth, that if activity is to be effective for God's glory it must stem from strong theological convictions. Otherwise, such activity is aimless and fruitless.

However, we have often been too sweeping in the criticism of activism. We have allowed this proper condemnation of non-religious activism to become an adverse judgment upon all activism. Such a judgment is unwarranted and must yield place to a more positive and constructive appraisal of Church affairs, if our ecclesiastical life is to regain its sense of eternal direction and spiritual proportions.

Moreover, we believe that we are now entering upon a new era in religious faith on this continent, an era in which a stronger and more definite Christian note is being sounded from our pulpits, in Church councils, and

in the Church press. It is a note that reaches back to "the hid battlements of eternity" and points forward to man's true destiny under the hand of God. This new emphasis is not unmindful of the need for the Church's witness in the social and political arena. And this witness is now being made from the vantage-ground of faith in Christ and not from the standpoint of social utilitarianism. Its sanction is God's disclosure in His living Word. This return to biblical essentials is "the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes" (Mark 12:11). In other words, the theological renaissance of today is helping the Church to recover that religious motivation which was the mainspring of "the active character of Calvinism." One of the salutary lessons the Church can now learn from Calvinism is that its activism can be both socially oriented and evangelically inspired.

IV

The chief question is therefore how the Church, and especially its leaders, can assist in the cultivation of a more evangelical activism. The following suggestions are offered as a brief reply:

(1) *There needs to be a re-thinking of the Evangel*

To some extent the Church is engaged in this already, through that theological revival which is the concern of the clergy and many also of the laity. What is necessary is that all who are thus caught up in the theological ferment of our time should have a fresh appreciation of the treasures provided in the Holy Scriptures and in the writings of Christian scholars across the centuries. There are spiritual powers latent in the fellowship of the Church and these have to be made accessible and available, so that believers may fully understand what their message is and how it may be stated in the language of this age.

This age has seen the emergence of many ideologies, and one is confronted with a plethora of competing systems, some of them Christian heresies, some of them the complete denial of Christianity. How shall the believer or the serious enquirer sift the true grain from the chaff unless he has a vital biblical theology? Only as our activism finds its inspiration, support and direction in the Gospel will it be genuinely evangelical.

(2) *The Church must help people to see the relevance of the Evangel for all of life*

This is not an easy task. It involves giving people instruction about Christian witnessing in and through their vocations.

The term "the ministry of the laity" is commonly used today. It is a good phrase because it reminds us that the whole Church has a responsibility to God to declare His truth by word and life. And if the gospel is to be related to the problems of today it will ultimately be done by the laity who have learned to integrate worship and work, faith and life.

The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting at Evanston in August, 1954, stated that "the time has come to make the min-

istry of the laity explicit, visible and active in the world. The real battles of faith today are being fought in factories, shops, offices and farms, in political parties and government agencies, in countless homes, in the press, radio and television, in the relationship of nations. Very often it is said that the church should 'go into these spheres'; but the fact is that the church is already in these spheres in the persons of its laity."[21]

But it is not enough to recognize that the Church is thus in these areas. For the laity must be trained to give a reason for the faith that is in them and be helped to make a distinctively Christian witness in their daily lives. It is not easy to say in every situation what the Christian attitude should be, how a Christian should behave, whether the faith implies one line of political action or another. Study of the Bible can assist Church members to make their decisions wisely, but it should be study within the fellowship of love and devotion. This will involve the right organization of groups for prayer, study and action. The thing that is dangerous is to let Christian faith become irrelevant to the life of modern man.

(3) *Preaching must become more kerygmatic and prophetic*

It must be first a proclamation of the mighty acts of God. At the same time preaching must declare God's will and announce God's call to men and nations. Such an announcement will sound the notes of both judgment and mercy, and make men realize the nature of this God with whom they have to do.

Calvin, in spite of his aristocratic leanings, had a great influence on the growth of democracy in Western culture. And one reason for this, we are told, is that he stirred up the masses by his preaching and thus helped to mould public opinion so that those who held political authority had to take cognizance of his persuasive powers. He declared to men that "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). It is not too much to expect the preachers of our time to do a similar work for God.

(4) *Church groups must be directed to see their work as a service for God*

This is a clubbing age. Its slogan is "the more we get together, the happier we will be." And our churches are not immune from this urge to get together for any purpose—good, bad or indifferent.

There is no need to disparage Church groups and organizations as such. We believe they have a ministry, under Christ, to perform. But as Church leaders we must make certain that they are fulfilling their task and that they have one single aim, above all lesser aims: to give Christ the pre-eminence. But in this, as in other matters, such direction will only be given to Church groups when those who are in positions of responsible leadership have strong convictions based upon the Evangel of God.

Finally, let it be remembered that human existence, according to the Gospel of God, is "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3) and has eternal dimensions. Such a life finds in the divine Christ an eschatological source

and a goal beyond the limits of space and time. From this faith alone will spring an activism that may be called evangelical. Its inspiration, its support and its direction are rooted and grounded in the eternal God. It is precisely because the Christian already participates in the unseen world by faith that he must strive by divine grace to order the life of the seen world in ways that are well-pleasing to Him who has called him "out of darkness into his marvellous light" (I Pet. 2:9). "The life beyond this world is, in very deed, the inspiration of the life that now is."[22]

Notes

1. A. Mitchell Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, revised ed., p. 1.
2. E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Vol. II, p. 577.
3. T. F. Torrance, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, p. 64.
4. *Institutes*, I. v. 1.
5. Quoted in Paul T. Fuhrmann, *God-Centred Religion*, p. 150.
6. *Institutes*, III. vii. 6.
7. Quoted in T. F. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
8. *Institutes*. III. xxiii. 12.
9. John Buchan, *Montrose*, p. 47.
10. *Institutes*, III. x. 6.
11. Troeltsch, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 611.
12. *Institutes*, III. vii. 2.
13. *Institutes*, III. viii. 1.
14. Mitchell Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 300.
15. Troeltsch, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 642.
16. R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 106.
17. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, pp. 108 ff., 170 f., &c.
18. Tawney, *op. cit.*, pp. 89 f.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
20. W. L. Sperry, *Religion in America*, p. 135.
21. Report of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches: section 6.
22. Troeltsch, *op cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1006.

Religion in the Public Schools

GEORGE C. PIDGEON

"YOUNG Canada is religiously illiterate." Again and again we hear this statement made. Facts cited to support it are disconcerting—to say the least. Padres who conferred with men who enlisted in the Forces during the last war were alarmed at the general ignorance of the Bible. Three High School teachers in Toronto said that when they were dealing with John Milton's sonnet on his blindness and came to the phrase, "that one talent which is death to hide", not one student knew the parable from which that figure of the "talent" was drawn. A student on a Western mission field found the children so completely ignorant of the Bible that he turned aside from other duties to teach the Bible every week in the four public schools of the district he served. One lad said to him: "My Mummy wants us to know these things, but she don't know nuthin' about them herself."

It is easy to multiply such instances and still easier to draw sweeping conclusions from them. Many can give equally striking examples on the other side. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence of widespread ignorance of the foundations of our faith to compel serious consideration.

Christian Education in the churches was never as efficiently carried on as it is today. Through their Boards and committees on Christian Education the churches are working untiringly to reach and assist the local congregation. Abundant material is being provided for Sunday Schools. Thousands of devoted men and women give their best week by week to the religious instruction of our young people. The ministers of the churches support them and devote much of their own time and strength to teaching.

Yet we must recognise the limitations of the churches' activities in this field. The Church School has only one hour a week for its work, and only a fraction of this time for actual teaching. It is often difficult to find qualified teachers. The equipment for the classes is poor in many churches. Only a minority of the boys and girls in many places attend Sunday School. One minister taught a class of eighty in a public school on the border of one of our cities, but he could reach only ten of them through the Church. This may be exceptional, but we have too many such exceptions. It is clear that far more must be done to bring the truth of God to the young people of the land.

In most of the Provinces the public schools are open for religious instruction and in all the Provinces they are open for worship. The General Synod of the Anglican Church in Canada issued the following statement in 1946:

> Religious Education consists of four major parts:
> 1. A simple Act of Worship (called by the Department of Education 'Religious Exercises') at the opening of the school, consisting of the Lord's Prayer, other prayers, Bible Reading (as a rule without comment), and a hymn.

2. Religious Instruction, a setting forth of the main story elements and general contents of the Old and New Testaments, with special emphasis on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

3. The use of other elements in the present programme of study which can be classified as religious, of which there is a considerable amount in all the Provinces.

4. An education permeated throughout with religion."

The first, third and fourth of these points are recognised in all the Provinces, but in some of them the second is left out.

Since the British North America Act of 1867 committed Education to the Provinces, we have different systems across Canada.

In Newfoundland the schools are staffed and operated by the main religious denominations, with provincial support. Here the churches have full opportunity to provide the worship and the religious teaching that their people need.

There is no provision for religious instruction in the schools of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Owing to the increase of the French Canadian element in New Brunswick a new situation is arising, so that religion is likely to have a larger place in their schools in the future. In all three Provinces the schools may be opened with the reading of the Bible (without comment) and the repetition of the Lord's Prayer. There is no provision for separate schools in the Education Acts of these three Provinces, although in the larger centres of population certain schools have been set apart by agreement for Roman Catholics.

Religious worship and instruction are compulsory in the Protestant schools of Quebec. Students in their school for Teachers are given careful guidance both in the conduct of worship and in teaching the Bible. Whilst there are separate schools in Quebec as in Ontario, the schools of the French Canadian majority in Quebec are not public schools in quite the same sense as the word "public" is used in the other Provinces: they are rather Roman Catholic schools.

Classes in the public schools of Ontario are opened each day with religious exercises consisting of a Scripture reading and the repeating of the Lord's Prayer, or other prayers approved for the purpose. Two half-hours each week, in addition to the time for worship, are provided for religious teaching. The staff of the Teachers' Colleges are required to train their students in the conduct of worship and in methods of teaching the Bible. The different denominations are expected to provide instruction for the students belonging to their respective churches in the content of the Bible teaching which is to be given. This is important, because the Regulations require teachers in the public schools to give religious instruction, following the "Guides" approved for the first six grades by the Department of Education. If for any reason teachers wish to be relieved of this responsibility, the ministers of the local churches may be engaged to do it or to arrange for its being taught by persons whom they approve.

There are no separate schools in Manitoba or British Columbia, but they

do exist in Saskatchewan and Alberta. The three prairie Provinces authorise a half-hour each day for religious teaching during school hours, but no provision is made in the course of training at "Normal Schools" to prepare student-teachers to undertake this religious instruction. That is left to the churches. Schools in all three Provinces are to be opened with religious exercises. British Columbia, however, adds the rider that "otherwise the schools shall be conducted on strictly secular and non-sectarian principles."

Care is taken in all the Provinces to safeguard the rights of children whose parents object either to the opening religious exercises or to the instruction provided, so that they may absent themselves without penalty. One notices in all our departments of Education the fear of sectarian teaching with its divisive effects, and also the belief that the Bible can be so taught as to bring out those central truths of our faith that all Christians accept.

The ministers of Education in the various Provinces are in favour of giving a prominent place to religion in the schools, and to that end desire the co-operation of the churches. Among them there is a strong conviction that the inspiration of true religion is needed in our public education: first, to make the teaching of ethics effective in the lives of the pupils; and second, to move our young people to adopt and advocate high ideals of citizenship.

Here, then, is an unrivalled opportunity for the churches. Yet they have been slow to seize it. The churches as such seem to refuse responsiblity for this work. It is one thing to have the teaching of religion in the public schools sponsored by inter-denominational agencies like ministerial associations. It is a totally different matter to have responsibility for it accepted by the churches as part of their programme of Christian Education, which they may work out together. Much excellent service is being rendered in all the Provinces by individual ministers co-operating through fraternal associations. But these groups are necessarily local in their range and cannot plan their activities on a province-wide scale. They have no authority. There is no one to whom the men teaching are accountable or who can give direction about the courses of study to be followed and supply the helps that are required. The only way in which all parts of the Provinces can be reached is by the churches assuming the work through their Boards of Christian Education, which operate through regular organisations—dioceses, presbyteries, conventions, or whatever their forms may be.

Now at last this is being done. Inter-church committees composed of men officially appointed by their respective denominations are being formed in the Provinces. They can act for their churches and have their decisions carried out by the churches. This provides for that joint action which is the first necessity. A single instance of the need for co-operation is to be seen in the fact that Ontario has authorised courses of Bible study for the first six grades and has had guidebooks prepared for the teachers and in the fact that the ministers of the churches have been asked to teach the students in the Teachers' Colleges. Yet the churches of Ontario have never

come together to arrange a course that will give unity to this work and prepare student-teachers to teach the subjects prescribed. Nor has there been any suggestion of the helps required for this particular task.

It is generally conceded that a Christian teacher, properly trained for this part of his work and in command of the discipline of the school, can give religious instruction more effectively than any one who comes into the school from outside. Under such a teacher religion is taught as an integral part of the curriculum, and, indeed, as the crown of all study. Where this is possible, the teacher is entitled to the minister's assistance in whatever way necessary and to the minister's support in the School Board and the community. Where it is found to be impossible or undesirable for the school teacher to do the work, the minister or ministers of the district can make an invaluable contribution to the moral and spiritual development of the pupils by teaching the prescribed religious courses.

One of the dangers at the present time is that, where the local clergy ignore the priceless opportunity offered by the Province, certain sects will take advantage to teach their own peculiar dogmas, with all their divisive influences. If such people obey the Regulations and use the courses authorised by the Department of Education, no objection can be taken; but the approval of the local ministers is required. It must be admitted, however, in view of some of the teaching given in the Teachers' Colleges, that the sects are not the only ones who teach sectarianism!

At a recent gathering of teachers the idea was stressed that the daily worship of the school offers the richest opportunity for cultivating a truly religious spirit. To teach by precept and example what worship really is, to explain every phrase of the Lord's Prayer and then lead in offering it reverently, to train young people to sing the National Anthem as a prayer, to insure their understanding of each passage of Scripture read, to inspire a love for some of the great hymns of the Church is to leave impressions on sensitive souls that time cannot efface.

One cannot study the Education Acts of the Provinces without feeling that the ideal of our legislators has been the training of the mind, culminating in the development of moral and spiritual character. To co-operate in the realisation of this ideal is the high and holy privilege offered to the Christian churches of our land.

Episcopacy and Presbytery: Lessons from The Scottish General Assembly of 1610

G. CAMPBELL WADSWORTH

I. Bishops and Presbyters from 1560 to 1610

IS it possible to combine the episcopal and presbyterial forms of Church government, so that the resulting merger will contribute measurably to the ultimate reunion of the whole Church of Christ? This is a question whose importance must be clear to everyone. It is a question which is being answered today in the everyday life of the Church of South India. It is one, moreover, to which the Scottish Church of the early Seventeenth Century can give a most interesting and instructive answer. Its answer is a qualified affirmative.

Yes, a fact it is that in the history of post-Reformation Scotland there exists a precedent for the union of the main features of the presbyterial and the episcopal systems. We refer to the important if little known agreements drawn up by the General Assembly of 1610, which effected an almost thirty years' close alliance of the Churches of England and Scotland. Here was a semi-union which might have lasted to the present day, had it not not been for the headlong, headstrong intrusions of royal and civil power, whose lamentable result was to involve the whole scheme in disrepute and disaster. What lessons does this Scottish precedent hold for us today? In order to secure an adequate answer to this question, let us look briefly at some of the events which led up to the 1610 Assembly.

In the year 1560 the Church of Scotland "was reformed from Popery by presbyters."[1] But the style of Church government, which Knox and the other Reforming leaders at once endeavoured to set in motion, was not the full-grown, presbyterial system of a later day. It was something much more rudimentary and simple. It consisted of kirk sessions, having the spiritual oversight of the individual parishes, provincial synods, whose boundaries were the same as those of the diocesan synods of pre-Reformation days, and the General Assembly for the whole country. In addition, there were the superintendents, the precise significance of whose office has been so frequently and so hotly debated. To most students it comes as a surprise, nay even as a shock, to be told that, in 1560 and for sometime thereafter, in this, the mother Church of English-speaking Presbyterianism, there were no presbyteries!

Twelve years later at the Convention of Leith—and for reasons into which we need not enter—an attempt was made to fit this developing,

presbyterial system into the ancient, episcopal fabric of chapters and deaneries, bishoprics and archbishoprics. The attempt was a failure. Its chief protagonist on the civil side, the Regent Morton, fell from power in 1580, and in that same year the redoubtable Andrew Melville, who had already produced the famous Second Book of Discipline, persuaded the General Assembly, by a large majority, to repudiate episcopacy and all its works. The endowments of the old bishoprics were annexed to the crown. Presbyteries, standing midway between the kirk sessions and the provincial synods, were given legal existence throughout the land. Finally, the complete presbyterial system was established by act of the Scottish parliament in 1592. For a while all seems to have gone well. "Never", writes an enthusiastic disciple of Andrew Melville, "were the assemblies of the saints more glorious or profitable to every one of the true members thereof than in the beginning of this year" (1596).[2] And yet, despite its seeming supremacy, Presbyterianism in its newly established state lasted for but fourteen brief years. Why?

Simply, one is persuaded, because the more extreme among the Presbyterian leaders speedily succeeded in convincing the majority of their countrymen, in both Church and State, that as a reasonable workable, ecclesiastical polity Presbyterianism was next to impossible. They did this by their hot, intemperate words and their reckless, irresponsible behaviour. What was even more to the point, King James VI, "the Scottish Solomon", then in his middle thirties, was not far behind in coming to a similar opinion. To him it became increasingly clear that the rude democracy, envisaged by the Presbyterian preachers, was wholly incompatible with his idea of what a Christian monarch, ruling by Divine right, ought to do and to be. From the pulpit of St. Giles the ministers of Edinburgh kept vigilant watch over James, his court, his pleasures and his politics, and woe betide the monarch if, in the eyes of the presbytery, he seemed to decline to the right hand or the left! Years later, when safely seated on the English throne, James declared in bitter tones that "Monarchy and Presbytery agreed about as well as God and the Devil." There were those who sympathized with him. Writing at a somewhat later date, John Forbes of Corse made reference to "the most unworthy abuse from Scottish ministers" suffered by the king, "such as might well have alienated the mind of any prince from the form of religion we possess."[3] At length, following a confused tumult in Edinburgh on the 17th of December, 1596—a near riot in which some of the extreme Presbyterians were implicated—James made up his mind to get rid of Presbyterianism and to replace it with some sort of a modified episcopacy.

His first steps in this direction were both cautious and constitutional. Unhappily, he failed to continue as he had begun. After 1603, when he became ruler of England in succession to the great Elizabeth, his methods quickly deteriorated and he did not hesitate to embark on a programme of arbitrary encroachment on the Scottish Church's legal privileges. He for-

bade the meeting of the General Assembly in 1603 and 1604, in open disregard of the law of the land. He imprisoned, and later banished, a group of devoted ministers who persisted in convening an Assembly at Aberdeen in 1605. And finally he silenced the trumpet-toned voice of Andrew Melville, by summoning him to London, locking him up in the Tower, and finally sending him to spend the rest of his life in exile. Despite these high-handed measures, however, it seems evident that the majority of the Scottish clergy were willing to go a long way in following the king in his plans for ecclesiastical reconstruction. In their judgment militant Presbyterianism had largely discredited itself and they were prepared to examine with an open mind whatever proposals James might place before them. Many of them credited the king, and rightly, with a sincere desire to advance the interests of the Reformed faith everywhere. And one of the chief of these interests, in the face of the powerful Romanist apologetic then being set forth, was the closing up of the ranks of the Reformed Churches.[4] To give the Scottish Kirk a form of government acknowledged by and resembling that of her sister Church of England would contribute materially to this end.

As early then as the year 1600, the king conferred on three favourably disposed ministers certain ancient, hierarchical titles, and made them respectively Bishops of Ross, Aberdeen and Caithness. Soon other ministers were nominated to the remaining nine dioceses. Be it noted, however, that since 1592, these sees had had no legal existence, nor had the new bishops themselves any authority to exercise a spiritual ministry within their bounds. But legal establishment was provided by Parliament in 1606, which restored "the estate of bishops" to their ancient and accustomed honours, dignities, lands and estate.[5] In the same year a gathering of ministers and influential laymen—summoned to Linlithgow by the king in place of the regular Assembly—took the important step of appointing the bishops to be constant or permanent moderators of their respective synods and of the presbyteries within whose borders they had their homes. Constant moderators were likewise found for all the remaining presbyteries of Scotland, the annual election of presiding officers thus being brought to an end.[6] Further Acts of both Parliament and Assembly confirmed what had already been accomplished, and further augmented the prestige, as they increased the powers, of the new, reformed episcopate.

The moving spirit behind all these changes was, of course, King James himself, who in the words of Spottiswoode, the newly appointed Archbishop of Glasgow, "was daily urging the bishops to take upon them the administration of all Church affairs."[7] This, the newly-created prelates were reluctant to do, without the official sanction of the whole Church speaking through its General Assembly. In order to satisfy their scruples the king ordered the holding of a General Assembly at Glasgow on the 8th day of June, 1610. To the proceedings and legislation of this memorable gathering we shall now turn.

II. The General Assembly of 1610

The Assembly of 1610 attempted a great work and, one believes, attained a measure of success. Yet the most famous Scottish Assembly of the Seventeenth Century—that of 1638—completely undid the work of its predecessor and repudiated its every action on the following five grounds: First, that the election of its members was not free. Second, that in addition to the pretended bishops there were a great many noblemen present, who had not been commissioned by any presbytery. Third, that the voting in the Assembly was not free. Fourth, that the principal enactments were all decided on in committee, and were read over only for formal ratification in open Assembly. Fifth, that bribery was widely practised to silence opposition and to secure a favourable vote.[8]

Where there is smoke there is usually some fire, and it must be admitted that behind some of these charges there lay a considerable amount of truth. It was this fact which led so thorough and unprejudiced an historian as William Law Mathieson to conclude that "This meeting had no pretensions to be a free General Assembly."[9]

But what it may have lacked in freedom the Assembly more than made up in decorum and efficiency. It observed the significant and stately forms, which even at that date had become a real part of its tradition. It convened in Glasgow Cathedral and remained in session for four days. It opened with three sermons, the first preached by Archbishop John Spottiswoode of Glasgow; the second by Bishop James Law of Orkney; and the third by Dr. James Hudson, a fraternal delegate from the Church of England. The commissioners then proceeded to the election of a moderator and from a list of four nominations chose by majority vote one of the most able and illustrious of contemporary Scotsmen, Archbishop John Spottiswoode, "to be moderator of this present Assembly." Then a committee of assessors was appointed to convene with the moderator concerning the business to be brought before the Assembly, and next in order a letter from King James was twice read to all present. "In it 'God's Lieutenant' mentions himself fourteen times—in his promises to the Church of peace, patrimony and the persecution of Papists!"[10] Thereupon the business committee went to work, guided largely by Archbishop Gladstanes of St. Andrews and the Lord High Commissioner Dunbar, to whom the king had imparted his plans in detail.

When on the following day the committee's report was presented to the Assembly, it was found to consist of ten articles. These were "divers times read publicly in the face of the whole Assembly", and when the vote was taken they were approved and ordered to be observed in all times coming. To this new legislation there was doubtless some opposition. This, however, never became effective nor even noisily vocal. The case of Mr. Peter Primrose, minister of Mauchline in Ayrshire, who "was minded to protest against the proceedings of the Assembly and for the liberties of the Kirk",[11] but

who got no further than the thought, may be taken as typical of a minority of the commissioners. They were not entirely persuaded as to the legality or expediency of what had been decreed. But the time for objection had now passed and the Assembly, after passing some additional legislation against Popery, concluded with the Lord High Commissioner's handing out considerable sums of money for the salaries of the constant moderators of presbyteries and for travelling expenses. It was this distribution that started the rumor of widespread bribery. For when one importunate brother lined up with the rest for his share of the royal largess, he was coldly commanded to be gone, "since he had done no service to his Majesty." And so, with the singing of the 103rd Psalm the General Assembly of 1610 passed into history.

No one today will want to defend the high-handed manner in which this Assembly was constituted and managed. On the other hand, no one will deny the fact that its ten "heads and articles" are of more than ordinary interest and importance. In the words of the late Professor James Cooper, "they were evidently drawn up with great care and skill, in such terms as to avoid on the one hand giving offense to the King on points on which he was known to be sensitive, and on the other hand to secure to the Church of Scotland every one of her valued courts:—Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies—along with the due rights of presbyters and the dignity, but also the discipline, of the Bishops."[12] Briefly summarized they are as follows:—

1. The Aberdeen Assembly of 1605 is acknowledged to have been illegal; the calling of Assemblies is said to appertain to the king by virtue of his prerogative, and the king is requested to call an Assembly once a year.
2. The Bishops are henceforth to be moderators of their diocesan synods, and the synods are to meet twice a year, in April and October.
3. No sentence of excommunication, or of absolution therefrom, is to be pronounced without the approbation of the bishop, and if he interferes with the pronouncing of any legitimate sentence, the General Assembly, having tried and convicted him, may petition the king for his removal from office.
4. All presentations of ministers to benefices are to be made to the bishop of the diocese. The bishop is then to require the ministers of the bounds, where the candidate is to serve, to testify as to his personal and professional qualifications. Next, the bishop is to take further trial himself, and finally being satisfied, he is to be assisted by such of the ministry of the bounds as he will assume unto himself, in perfecting the whole act of ordination.
5. In the deposition of a minister the bishop is to associate with himself all the ministers of those bounds where the delinquent served.
6. Every minister on his admission to a parish is to swear obedience to

the king and his bishop, according to the form approved at the Convention of Leith in 1572.

7. The visitation of each diocese is to be undertaken either by the bishop himself or, if that be impossible, by his deputy. And ministers who wilfully absent themselves from the meetings of the diocesan assembly or synod are to be suspended. If still contumacious, they shall be deprived of their benefices.
8. The weekly exercise of doctrine is to be continued among the ministers, to be moderated by the bishop, if he be present, or by some other whom he may appoint at the synod.
9. The bishops shall be subject in all things concerning their life, conversation, office and benefice to the censure of the General Assembly, and being found culpable, shall with the king's consent be deprived.
10. No bishop shall be elected until the completion of his fortieth year, and after ten years service as a teaching minister.[18]

Even a cursory reading of the above articles should be sufficient to show that the 1610 Assembly merits lasting recognition for the skilful fashion in which it managed to combine the essentials of both the presbyterial and episcopal systems of Church government. For, as has already been stated, the articles confirmed to the Church of Scotland the undisturbed functioning of her long-tested hierarchy of Courts from the General Assembly down to the Kirk Session.

There is to be an annual General Assembly (Articles 1, 3 and 9) and, as usual, it is to be the highest ecclesiastical judicature in the land, supreme not merely over the lesser Church courts as hitherto, but also over the twelve diocesan bishops. To Scottish Churchmen of that day—conscious as they were of the manner in which the Assembly had become the very conscience of their nation—any other arrangement would have been unthinkable. Moreover, it is exclusively stated (Articles 2 and 7) that the synods of the Church are to function as formerly, meeting twice a year, although each will now have a perpetual president in its own bishop. The word "presbytery" nowhere appears in the articles, probably because King James could hardly contain himself when he heard the term! But the presbytery *as a fact* is there in the legislation, because the ministers of the bounds (Articles 3 and 4) and the weekly exercise of doctrine (Article 8) are simply the presbytery engaged in its routine task of exercising ministerial oversight and encouraging sacred learning among its members. Similarly the Kirk Session, if not explictly mentioned, is clearly implied in the reference, in Article 3, to the parish where a process toward excommunication began. Beyond all doubt it was the intention of those who drew up the articles that the key courts, on which the whole fabric of presbyterial rule is seen to rest, should continue to meet and act, not merely as in the past, but now more vigorously and effectively than ever under the constant moderatorship of the bishops and their deputies. And for the next twenty-eight years it actually worked out in that way.

Such being the presbyterial features of the 1610 Agreement, we may glance briefly at the episcopal side of the picture. The articles make plain that the bishops were henceforth to have most of the usual powers of their office: the oversight of ministers, the presidency at synods and presbyteries, the charge of ordination and the conduct of matters to which the state must be a consenting party. (Articles 2, 3, 4, etc.) It was assumed, though not explicitly stated in the legislation, that future bishops would first be nominated by the crown and then obediently "elected" by the chapters of the cathedrals concerned (Article 10). Since, however, one of King James's chief reasons for setting up episcopal rule was to bring the polity of the Kirk into line with that of the Church of England, a further problem immediately presented itself. This had its grounds in the Anglican objection that the new Scottish prelates, for all their wide powers and high-sounding titles, could not be regarded as true bishops in the Church of God, since no canonical bishop had ever laid hands on them in a valid consecration. How then were they to secure this consecration, which from the Anglican viewpoint was so important? As usual, canny King James had a scheme of his own in mind with which to meet the difficulty.

III. The Sequel to the Assembly

In the mid-Autumn following the 1610 Assembly, Moderator Spottiswoode was commanded by the king to come up to London and to bring two of his brother bishops with him. When he and his companions, Bishop Lamb of Brechin and Bishop Hamilton of Galloway, presented themselves at court, James informed them of his desire that they receive regular consecration at the hands of the English episcopate. Spottiswoode has left us a first-hand account of what was said and done on this occasion, and we can do no better than continue the story in his historic words:

"A question," he writes, "was moved by the learned and pious Dr. Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Ely, touching the consecration of the Scottish Bishops, who, as he said, must first be ordained Presbyters as having received no Ordination from Bishops. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who was by, maintained that thereof there is no necessity, because where Bishops could not be had, the Ordination given by Presbyters must be esteemed lawful; otherwise it might be doubted if there was any lawful vocation in most of the reformed Churches. This was applauded by the other Bishops; Ely acquiesced, and at the day and place appointed the three Scottish Bishops were consecrated."[14] Soon after their return home, Spottiswoode Lamb and Hamilton initiated the consecration of the remaining nine Scottish Bishops, "as near as they were done at Lambeth as they could possibly imitate."[15]

All of this brings us face to face with a question of first-rate importance—important in 1610 and equally so today, in view of the possibility of future unions between the episcopal and non-episcopal Churches: What was the attitude of Spottiswoode and his fellow prelates to the royal command that they undergo consecration according to the rites of the Anglican Church?

Every available piece of evidence points to the probability that, while they were willing to be consecrated in order to satisfy Anglican scruples and to advance the designs of the king, yet, had they been free to follow their own inclinations, they would doubtless have dispensed with it entirely. The Scottish clergy of that day were Calvinists almost to a man. From Geneva they had inherited the cardinal conviction that the presbyterate was the one, original and essential order of the Holy Ministry, and that all bishops were but presbyters and all presbyters bishops. There was not the slightest doubt in their minds as to the full-orbed regularity and validity of their own Scottish ministry in the Catholic or Universal Church.

It was not until another twenty years had passed that there began to appear among them those who held and taught that bishops alone were the true successors of the Apostles, and that an unbroken episcopal succession was one of the great indispensables of the Church of God. The Scots historian, Mathieson, puts this whole subject in a way that cannot be bettered when he writes: "To the virtues of the Apostolical Succession . . . the Scottish episcopate awoke only in its decline, and in all but a few cases never discovered them at all. It was not till July, 1631, that the *jus divinum* of Episcopacy was asserted from the pulpit; and Maxwell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who preached on that occasion, got so little thanks from the bishops that they warmly repudiated his doctrine, and told him that it could not be proved."[16] To sum up, the Scottish bishops of 1610 accepted canonical consecration at Anglican hands merely as an instrument of policy. They acquiesced in the rite for the attainment and preservation of Church Unity throughout Great Britain, but without any deep conviction as to its spiritual significance. To them it was a symbol, not a semi-sacrament. The importance of this attitude can hardly be over-estimated.

Meanwhile the new ecclesiastical settlement, set up in 1610, was still without legal or civil sanction. This was attended to by the Parliament of 1612, which ratified the Assembly's action and made the new order the law of the land.

And now we must consider the following all-important question: What was the success of the 1610 Concordat? Briefly stated, how did it work? The answer can be quickly given. The Agreements worked out very well—one might even say surprisingly well—when we consider all that was done, both from the Royalist and from the extreme Presbyterian sides, to discredit and destroy them.

For one thing, King James failed to live up to his side of the bargain. Having got a modified episcopacy established in his ancient kingdom, he began almost at once, by his arbitrary methods and unconstitutional interference in Church matters, to alienate public opinion both from himself and from the bishops. When Parliament met in 1612 he saw to it that Articles 9 and 10, which subjected the bishops to the censure of the Assembly and set up an age qualification for their office, were struck out of the record.[17] Again, in violation of the provisions of 1610, which had plainly

postulated annual Assemblies, James called only three Assemblies during the remaining fifteen years of his reign, and his ill-starred son, Charles I, called but one, and that when it was too late to rescue the 1610 experiment from disaster. Moreover, by their repeated attempts to assimilate the Scottish to the English Church in matters of public worship, both rulers succeeded in implanting in the minds of the Scots the deep-rooted suspicion that episcopal oversight, royal tyranny and Anglican ritual were all bound up together and were equally the enemies of civil liberty and the Reformed Faith. When the Scottish people as a whole became persuaded that this was so, the 1610 episcopate, in the words of Archbishop Spottiswoode, "went down like a castle of cards."

So much for royal interference. And now a word about the continued opposition of the extreme Presbyterians. It goes without saying that, had Andrew Melville and his fellow exiles been free to return to Scotland after 1610, they would have written, argued and preached against the Agreements with the full force of their polemical power. In the words of one of their party, the 1610 enactments were but "the conclusions of a corrupt crew", and although the Melville men were now disarmed and helpless, they were but biding their time, in the hope that some day the royalist and episcopal reaction would over-reach itself and a new revolution in Church and state would bring them again to power. So far as they were able they did not hesitate to criticize the new order and to defame, for the most part without the slightest proof, the bishops who were trying to make it work.

And yet despite such blundering interference from the right, and such ceaseless criticism from the left, the Concordat of 1610 worked out, on the whole, in both a happy and an effective fashion. The bishops took up residence in their respective dioceses and proceeded to fulfil the new duties which had devolved upon them. Ordinations of ministers were henceforth carried out by the bishops, assisted in the laying on of hands by the ministry of the bounds, that is, the clerical members of the local presbytery. In this way the Church of Scotland began slowly to possess a ministry recognized as regular and valid by the Church of England. But it is to be observed that of the ministers, who had been ordained in presbyterial fashion prior to 1610, not one was re-ordained, it being the contention of the whole Scottish Church that these men had been quite lawfully ordained already. Indeed, while for the next twenty-eight years episcopal ordinations were the rule in Scotland, the Kirk never lacked apologists to maintain that presbyterial ordination contained all the essentials of a valid entry to the Holy Ministry. An interesting case in point was supplied by the devout and able bishop, Patrick Forbes of Aberdeen, who allowed his illustrious son, Dr. John Forbes, to be ordained by a presbytery in Holland and then brought him home to be professor of Divinity at Aberdeen. "And that son, the ablest defender of episcopacy that ever appeared in Scotland, asserted that, even where there was a bishop, presbyters might ordain."[18] For the next generation, however, Scottish presbyters refrained from doing so.

Thus the new order worked out surprisingly well. After fifty years of almost ceaseless controversy the Scottish Church as reformed from Popery now enjoyed nearly three decades of prosperity and peace. A more generous theology than the harsh Calvinism which had hitherto been preached came into fashion. Sacred learning of an ecumenical sort began increasingly to flourish. Able and moderate men came to the fore, who saw to it that churches were built and properly appointed. Much of the beautiful communion plate still in use in Scotland was presented during this period. Moreover, some of the bishops were men of serene and saintly character. Boyd of Argyle planted churches and schools across the length and breadth of his barbarous, Highland diocese, while Campbell of the Isles revived the primitive simplicity of Iona and St. Columba.

But it was in the city of Aberdeen that the new regime came to its finest flower. Here the famous "Aberdeen Doctors" pursued their studies, wrote their books, and lived their lives of radiant godliness, and so cast a glow of cultural and religious light over the whole of Scotland. Here Dr. John Forbes wrote his '*Irenicum*', in order to reconcile Presbyterians and Episcopalians, and here also his distant cousin, Dr. William Forbes, set himself to the much greater and graver task of bringing Romanist and Reformed to understand each other, as he penned his ever-famous work '*Considerationes Modestae.*'

It is sad to record that the lives of these peacemakers were at length shadowed and their labours frustrated by the blundering folly of two interfering monarchs, and by the unrelenting bitterness of those extreme Churchmen who had never forgiven the king, the bishops, and their fellow-ministers for establishing the Concordat of 1610. But they had lived and laboured long enough to make it clear to everyone of open mind and sympathetic spirit that it was and is possible for presbytery and episcopacy to dwell together in unity for the glory of God and for the peace of the Church.

Notes

1. These famous words are from an Act of the Scottish Parliament passed in 1690. A resolution of the General Assembly adopted at Dundee in 1580. "*Book of the Universal Kirk*," p. 194.
2. Calderwood—*History of the Church of Scotland*, Vol. 5, pp. 387–388.
3. Forbes—*Irenicum*, p. 101.
4. Cooper—*The Church of Scotland, 1610–1638*, in Christian Unity Association Papers, p. 59.
5. *Acts of the Scottish Parliament*, Vol. 4, pp. 281–284.
6. *Book of the Universal Kirk*, p. 570.
7. Spottiswoode—*History of the Church of Scotland*, Vol. 3, p. 205.
8. Peterkin—*Records of the Church of Scotland*, p. 24.
9. Mathieson—*Politics and Religion*, Vol. 1, p. 310.
10. Hewison—*The Covenanters*, Vol. 1, p. 186.
11. Calderwood—*op. cit.*, Vol. 7, p. 96.
12. Cooper—*Reunion, a Voice from Scotland*, p. 28.
13. *Book of the Universal Kirk*, pp. 587–589.
14. Spottiswoode—*op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 208–209.
15. Row—*History of the Church of Scotland*, p. 283.
16. Mathieson—*op. cit.*, p. 322.
17. Compare the Minutes of the 1610 Assembly with the Acts of Parliament of 1612.
18. Cooper—*op. cit.*, pp. 43–44.

The Relevance of Paul for Preaching

ELIAS ANDREWS

PAUL did more than any of the apostles "to win for the Christian religion its place in the life of the world, and he has done more than any of them in always winning that place again when it seemed in danger of being lost. Evangelical revival, in personalities so powerful as Luther, Wesley, and Chalmers, has always been kindled afresh at the flame which burns inextinguishable in his testimony to Christ."[1] Thus did James Denney pay tribute to the great apostle to the gentiles. More recently, and just prior to his death, Martin Dibelius declared that whenever the Church "levelled his (Paul's) thoughts down and made them innocuous by incorporating them into its own systems," they have "again and again been dug up" and let loose to influence, and sometimes to initiate, great movements in the history of Christianity.[2] The story is written from Augustine to Karl Barth.

This estimate of Paul's place in Christian history may have something significant to say to the Church in the twentieth century. For clearly it has been the proclamation of Paul's interpretation of the Gospel, and not merely an academic understanding of it, that has been the primary factor in producing those forces which, more than once, and in dark days, have turned the minds of men back again to the central conceptions of the Christian religion, and have quickened and revitalized, with amazing results, the life of the Christian Church. It does not follow, of course, that what happened in former centuries, when man's outlook and preoccupations were so different, can happen again in this. Nevertheless, one might surely be pardoned the suspicion that this periodic return to Paul has not been purely fortuitous, but due rather to something so eternally and universally true in his gospel that it never ceases to have contemporary appeal. While we cannot attempt to be exhaustive, an examination of certain basic Pauline conceptions may enable us to judge the relevance, or otherwise, of his thought for preaching in our age.

I. Paul's Gospel

Fundamental to everything that Paul taught is his gospel, grounded in the conviction that the nature of God is fully revealed in the fact of the cross. There the unqualified love of God has been set forth, attested in the resurrection, and made available to men through faith. When it is accepted, it initiates them into a new relationship with God which is frequently described as being "in Christ" or "in the Spirit". This new relationship is defined as being "justified", which in modern speech means "brought into right relation with God", not indeed one of moral perfection, but rather of commitment to the divine will and purpose in Christ, and thus a condition

of heart and mind well-pleasing to God, accepted by Him as now facing in the right direction, and anticipating the final completion of the work of redemption here begun. The reality of this experience, made necessary by man's sin and by his impotence for self-deliverance, is for Paul the Gospel, the good news that God, on the ground of faith, recreates and redirects the life of man, and welcomes him into the family of those who share His own life because they share His will. Thus the society of which Jesus dreamed, the company of those who acknowledge and seek to extend the sovereign purpose of God, comes into being.

To this Gospel succeeding ages have turned to discover, or to rediscover, the power of the Christian faith, and to find that where ritualism, moralism, mysticism, humanism, and many other forms of belief and practice have failed, the Christian Gospel really works. Why this turning to Paul? Why not to the religion of Jesus? The answer is that through Paul's work and teaching men have found their way to the heart of the Gospel of the Kingdom which Jesus proclaimed; for, while our Lord proclaimed the Kingdom clearly enough and described the character of the sons of that Kingdom, he did more. "In actual fact," declares one writer, "what happened was that Jesus laid down the Christian ideal, and *then* went on to the creation of that moral and spiritual dynamic by which alone the ideal can be transmuted into actuality."[3] This is the crux of the matter, since one cannot isolate the religion of Jesus from what he was and did; and what he was and did cannot be separated from those events from which has stemmed the "moral and spiritual dynamic" which has given actuality to the Christian ideal, namely his cross and resurrection. Paul's significance lies mainly in this, that he experienced and interpreted this dynamic, and believed it to be as essential for others as for himself.

His proclamation of this Gospel was inseparable from his emphasis upon faith, the key that unlocked this reservoir of power and gave it freedom to do its redeeming work. But, as Nygren insists, "it is not man's faith that gives the Gospel its power; quite the contrary, it is the power of the Gospel that makes it possible for one to believe."[4] This is what Paul means when he writes: "Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). The business of the Church then, in every age, is to placard Christ before men, in all the aspects of his mercy, love, and grace, as concretely manifested in his life, death, and resurrection, that the drawing power of that sight may enable them to say: "Lord I believe." It is difficult, therefore, to avoid the conclusion that the inescapable presuppositions of all effective and evangelical preaching for us, as for Paul, are man's sinful helpless plight, the offer of God's saving grace in the Gospel, and the faith that is elicited when by proclamation Christ is seen as the embodiment of the unfathomable love of God. The modern preacher may find it necessary to translate this, as a recent writer maintains,[5] into terms intelligible to his congregation. He cannot dispense with it.

II. The Christian Fellowship

The positive issue of such preaching is the fellowship of believers or, as the apostle describes it, "the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). This introduces us to the many metaphors he used to describe the Church, all of which, properly understood, suggest its true nature and its distinctive character. It recalls too what has already been said about the family of those who share the divine life, for that is precisely what the Church is in Paul's thought, and it accounts for the remarkably rich figures he uses to express it. What, for example, does "Body of Christ" (I Cor. 12:27) mean but a community, or fellowship, expressing the divine life of those who are already in the Kingdom, already sharing a life which partakes of the life that is eternal? Again, note his description of the church as "the temple of the living God" (II Cor. 6:16, cf. I Cor. 3:16). Here the reference is to the very inner shrine itself (*naos*), the place where the living God meets man, where the life of God dwells, a beautiful, though highly exacting criterion of churchly character expressed even more vividly in the phrase "habitation (dwelling place) of God" (Eph. 2:22). Observe still further the reference to Christians having their "commonwealth in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). This metaphor, perhaps most clearly of all, characterizes the fellowship of the Church as sharing the divine life in this world, partaking of an eternal citizenship, drawing its source of strength and power, and deriving its very nature, from the life of God. Consider also the affirmation that Christ dwells in his Church, that he is its very life, that the Church is, therefore, the instrument of his redemptive purpose (Col. 1:24, 3:15; Eph. 1:22, 4:15, 5:23–32). Here is a relationship so close that the apostle can assert that the Church, in bodying forth the life of God, will share the vicarious life of Christ, and thus extend his passion in the world until the final redemption. The words of Professor H. H. Rowley, in another context, accurately interpret Paul's view: "In a profound sense the Church is called to agonize for the world's redemption, and to realize that it can never fulfil its mission in the world unless it is prepared to tread the path of suffering and sacrifice, and to know in its heart an agony that reflects the agony of the cross."[6] Space forbids reference to other confirmatory allusions to the Church in Paul's thought. These, however, are clearly relevant in an age when often the Church's true nature and function are hidden in the eagerness to enlarge its membership and to stress the external aspects of its life. The Gospel is only adequately and effectively communicated to the world in the measure that the church identifies itself with the purposes of God for humanity, and seeks to reveal in its witness the life divine as sacrificial love.

III. The New Humanity

Co-existent in Paul's thought with his high conception of the Church is his teaching concerning "the new humanity" which Christ, as the Second

Adam, has begun, and of which he is "the first-born" (Rom. 8:29). We must not get so academically involved in a study of the Adam theology, and the contrast between the work of the *first* with that of the *second*, as to miss the tremendous significance of this aspect of the apostle's thought. For Adam stands for unregenerate man, with all his progeny; and now that Rousseau's influence is less than it used to be, and our sitting on the edge of world catastrophe gives the lie to the facile views of human nature largely derived from him, we are not so readily disposed to deny the existence of such a basic wrongness in man. Christ, the second Adam, however, comes "retrieving the error of the First",[7] reversing the stream of history and introducing a new creation, a new kind of manhood, a new spiritual race, of which he is the head. What God had intended for mankind, and what man's moral perversity had continually frustrated, has now become clear in this new society of those who live "in Christ" and "walk in love" (Gal. 5:13; Eph. 5:2). Man the ego-centric individual, governed by his selfish passions and impulses, has given place to the man who has died to self and who lives, imitating Christ, in self-sacrificial service. The whole creation was designed to bring forth this type of manhood, and even now is eagerly awaiting the consummation of such a humanity in the revealing of the "sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). The ground of this hope is that the Church already is the nucleus of the new humanity.

Is not this a word in urgent need of proclamation today, in a world that has lost its nerve, trembling on the brink of despair, because it has lost its faith in human nature and its hope in God? The new world, with new terrors undreamed of, is still largely in the hands of the "old humanity", and that is what frightens us. Our world cries out for a "new humanity", and we may agree with C. H. Dodd that "any effective reconciliation between nations will involve a real new community."[8] This much is imperative, ere we suffer irreparable disaster. Our expectation can only be from God, who alone can change the evil desires and wilful passions of men as they are gathered into, and brought under the influence of, His Church. How eagerly Paul would bless the ecumenical movement! His teaching is full of it, because he so faithfully interpreted the mind of his master.

IV. The Meaning of History

Reflection upon the nature of the Gospel, the Church, and the New Humanity, inevitably led Paul to concern himself with the meaning of history; for it was quite impossible to make such affirmations concerning these without seeing their implications for an understanding of the whole historical process. What the apostle saw unfolding before his very eyes he believed to be the fulfilment of God's purpose for Israel. His people had been destined to bless the world. They had failed in their day of visitation, but now through Jesus Christ there was coming into being a completely new society, universal in its outreach, with no barriers of race or class whatsoever, all one in Christ, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, living as

brethren, reconciled to one another, and at peace with God. This impressive fact could mean but one thing: God willed this process of reconciliation, for it was manifestly creating a new Israel, which was to be the mark of Christ's coming. History, therefore, does not run a purposeless course. It must be understood in the light of the redeeming reconciling work of Christ, for that is the clue to its meaning.

The relevance of this for our age is too obvious to occupy us at length. Many people, having had this "clue to history", like John Richard Green, the English historian, "have lost it without gaining another".[9] Many more have not found any clue at all and are eagerly reading the numerous philosophies of history that are seeking to fill the void. Let the Church proclaim afresh, with Paul, that Christ is the clue to history, that he sits in judgment upon all our projects, small or great, national or international, that his Lordship must be acknowledged in all things, that destruction awaits all plans and purposes that ignore him, and that all things in heaven and in earth are to be brought to their consummation in him who is to be pre-eminent (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:10).

V. Christian Responsibility

The apostle, however, though fundamentally an idealist who saw everything, including cosmic meaning, through his interpretation of Christ and the Church, was also a realist who had to do with churches in which, as now, great divergence existed between theory and practice, and often very different levels of understanding concerning the nature of the Christian faith. Some Christians were weak, others strong; some 'babes in Christ', others mature; some insisting on their freedom, as they had a right to do, others not quite so confident and somewhat hesitant about certain habits and restrictions to abandon which would leave them conscience-stricken. How modern! Is not this an accurate picture of every church in every place? What then is the responsibility of the mature enlightened Christian, the man who has a proper appreciation of Christian liberty, and who knows the rights of the Christian man? Is he to insist upon doing as he likes, standing upon his privileges and looking patronizingly, or even disdainfully, upon others who do not see eye to eye with him, who have not perhaps quite so deep an understanding of the faith as he? No! says Paul. The more mature the Christian, the greater his understanding of the faith and freedom. The closer his relationship to Christ, the more anxious he will be to shoulder his responsibility for the building up of the Church, even to the point of dedicating his own rights and privileges, subordinating his own wishes, and consecrating his own liberty for the sake of Christ and his brethren (cf. Rom. 14; I Cor. 8). Thus can he walk in love; thus can he care for the Church for which Christ cared enough to die (Eph. 5:25).

How essential this is in an age when many members of the Church are insisting upon their freedom to follow certain courses of conduct—to drink alcoholic liquor, for example—and forgetting that Christian freedom,

precious as it is, is a blessing to be used for the glory of Christ and for the sake of those for whom he was willing to sacrifice everything. To care for men as God cares, to seek to do anything and everything to develop their moral and spiritual capacities, and thus to lead them into the higher reaches of life as children of God, that is to be a truly responsible Christian, dedicated to the purposes of love.

VI. The Holy Spirit

In like manner Paul dealt with all spiritual gifts, particularly the gift of the Spirit. That some in his churches should be influenced strongly by external evidences of Spirit-possession is not surprising, for in ancient times the Spirit of God was held to be present, in special degree, when there were unusual physical accompaniments. Thus when the *glossolalia* appeared, Paul, although recognizing and even sharing this phenomenon, was faced with the problem of persuading those who were attracted to it that the only gift worth coveting was that which served the Church (I Cor. 14). The problem has recurred again and again and is with us today, stress being laid upon the external emotional evidences of religion, and the work of the Spirit being identified all too often with spectacular phenomena, with the result that many suspect any reference to the work of God's Spirit altogether. This is most unfortunate, and means that we are still lacking a true understanding of the nature, activity, and power of the Holy Spirit. From the apostle we can learn to proclaim again a doctrine woefully neglected in our time.

Clearly Paul identified the Spirit of God with the power that raised Jesus from the dead, and he believed that this same power also raised Christians into newness of life. He came, however, to think of it in terms of the Spirit of Christ, so that being "in the Spirit" and being "in Christ" meant the same thing. "For him," declared James Moffatt, "the Spirit is no longer a sudden force or impulse that comes and goes, it is not merely a special endowment for special service, or an ecstatic rapture of abnormal origin, but the power of the indwelling Lord in the sphere of the community."[10] Thus he ethicized the Holy Spirit and regarded the best evidence of it as appearing in those fruits which are the harvest of love (Gal. 5:20). In this he still points the way to a vitally needed reinterpretation, for many folk cling to an older and much less significant view because they have never been introduced to anything different. The man who is moved to gentleness, kindness, patience, generosity to the point of self-sacrifice, acceptance of his Christian responsibility to others and to his church, may not be shouting in an "unknown tongue", but may be even more genuinely baptized with the Holy Spirit.

VIII. The Christian Hope

The present-day emphasis upon Christian hope reminds us finally how up to date Paul was on this very point. He did not build his belief in eternal

life upon some philosophical argument. Rather, as in the case of each concept discussed above, eternal life is a concomitant of the experience of being "in Christ." To fail to see this, and to forget the power that initiated this spiritual union, is to miss the ground of our Christian hope altogether. Paul insisted, as did the Johannine writer later, that eternal life is qualitative and is already being shared by those who are "in the Spirit." The life now being enjoyed in the Body of Christ, the Church, is the pledge of the life which one day will be the believer's possession in its fullness (Eph. 1:14). The ultimate ground of this life with its attendant hope is the gracious purpose of God (Rom. 8:31–39). Surely for the Christian man there can be no other. And if we inquire further as to what form that ultimate existence will take, Paul has truth which needs to be emphasised in our day. Immortality means nothing to him unless it be the preservation, in some form, of human personality. He does not indulge in the endless ideas or fantasies of eternal salvation to which many, in all ages, have been prone. He holds "to the essential thing: that, whatever else it may be, salvation means sharing the likeness of Christ, and Christ we know."[11] Even as the Christian has borne the image of "the man of dust", so also will he bear the image of "the man of heaven", Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:49). Perhaps, as Emil Brunner suggests, "in human language there can be found no more perfect expression of the life of eternity as consisting in the eternal plenitude of God's love" than the Pauline description "face to face (I Cor. 13:12), when time is no more, and the Christian, in "the perfect present of God", is forever with the Lord.[12]

The Christian Gospel is at once simple and profound. No one knew this better than Paul, who can still speak to us of its simplicity and its profoundity. We need both to give strength and certainty to our Christian witness.

Notes

1. J. Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel*, p. 22.
2. M. Dibelius, *Paul*, pp. 1 ff.
3. Edwin Lewis, *The Faith we Declare*, p. 70.
4. A. Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, p. 71.
5. A. M. Hunter, *Interpreting Paul's Gospel*, pp. 85–88.
6. H. H. Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord*, p. 56.
7. W. A. Curtis, *Jesus Christ the Teacher*, p. 34.
8. C. H. Dodd, *Christianity and the Reconciliation of the Nations*, p. 27.
9. H. S. Coffin, *The Portraits of Jesus Christ in the New Testament*, p. 81.
10. James Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament*, p. 168.
11. C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Moffatt N. T. Commentary), p. 142.
12. E. Brunner, *Eternal Hope*, pp. 204–206.

Book Reviews

The Hope of the Gospel. By James Sutherland Thomson. London: S.C.M., 1955. Pp. 188. $2.25.

This book contains the text of the Alexander Robertson Lectures delivered at the University of Glasgow in January, 1954, by the Dean of the Faculty of Divinity of McGill. It is on the level of what the French call "haute vulgarisation", rather than of profound and exact theological scholarship, and is more pleasant to read than stimulating or suggestive. One searches in vain for indications of a dominant thesis that would give some degree of unity of thought to the whole; it moves discursively, and in the main derivatively, over a wide range of general ideas and movements of thought, ancient and modern, with plenty of warmth and conviction but little that can be regarded as a personal contribution to the understanding of the main theme.

The first lecture treats of "Hope in Human Life", with a good deal of attention to the psychology of hope and to its treatment by a number of Christian philosophers, poets and theologians. In the second lecture, entitled "The Gospel before the Gospel", Thomson surveys the history and literature of Israel, with particular attention to the emergence of different forms of eschatological expectation and brief discussions of "Day of the Lord", "Messiah", "Servant of the Lord", and "Son of Man". All of these are too brief to be really illuminating. Here, as elsewhere, one encounters sweeping generalizations that could hardly be substantiated. For instance, we read (p. 43), that "no alteration of consequence has taken place in human affairs without the advent of a messianic saviour". Would the Dean put Alexander the Great in this category, or would he hold that "no alteration of consequence" took place as a result of the career of the great Macedonian? And did not the Industrial Revolution bring about—and is not the greater revolution of Automation presently bringing about—alterations of vast consequence in human affairs without a sign of a "messianic saviour"?

The next two chapters, on "The Gospel of Jesus" and "The Apostolic Gospel" respectively, involve the lecturer in thumb-nail treatments of a hundred and one particular problems of New Testament criticism and especially in the great question of the relation between the gospel preached by Jesus and the gospel proclaimed by the apostolic church. In the absorption with these introductory problems the specific place of "hope" in the gospel message is not precisely lost from sight, but appears rather to be arbitrarily dragged in from time to time as an adjunct to the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins. "The real hope of the gospel, then, lay in the connection between forgiveness and repentance" (p. 99).

The Dean appears to be much more at home when he moves from the

biblical and historical fields to the ground of contemporary life and thought, as he does in the last two lectures—"The Gospel and the Contemporary World" and "Christian Hope". Here again we have more of those staggering generalisations, such as, "The great evangelists of the Church have all passed through the existentialist crisis of frustration and defeat" (p. 162). Is Christian experience so stereotyped as all that? But we also have some useful discussions of the theology of Paul Tillich, of existentialism, of Bultmann's "de-mythologizing" (treated with a refreshing degree of sympathy), and of Logical Positivism—though here again one is bound to ask whether anything significant could be said about so many and so weighty matters within the compass of a few pages.

There is the usual annoyance of finding that a book published in England at 10/6 ($1.40) is offered to the Canadian reader at $2.25. Seeing that there is no duty on books printed in Great Britain, there ought to be some means of reducing this differential.

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Belief and Unbelief since 1850. By H. G. Wood. Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1954. Pp. vii, 143. $2.50.

H. G. Wood has written what may be described as a comparative study in religious climatology. He has turned, like many others in our time, to the study of the past in an endeavour to understand the present. The volume consists of lectures delivered at the University of Cambridge and this accounts for the limitations in the scope of the survey, which the author fully recognizes and accepts. The analysis is therefore highly selective and some major elements in the total picture of the period under review are either completely ignored or barely mentioned.

This is a very English book. The writer confines his attention almost exclusively to the English scene during the last hundred years and this may account for his emphasis on the decline of religious faith. His study may be said to provide a commentary on Matthew Arnold's well-known poem "Dover Beach", in which he contemplates "the Sea of Faith" only to hear "its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar". He begins with a contrast between the general attitude towards attendance at public worship in 1850 and 1950 and passes on to note the same decline in knowledge of the Bible and of the Christian faith. These are evidences of a marked change in the "climate of opinion", with the resultant effect of inducing a virtual disappearance of concern about matters of religious belief. What has produced this change? So far as doctrine is concerned, he cites two beliefs, which held the attention of the 1850s and which now have been almost completely abandoned, viz., "the belief in eternal punishment and the

substitutionary penal view of the Atonement". The writer maintains that "both doctrines are incompatible with any intelligible conception of the Fatherhood of God".

Dr. Wood fully realizes that non-theological factors have been operative in the change. A chapter is devoted to a discussion of "The Impact of Natural Science" and there he observes that the resultant technological climate is at least as important as the theoretical views of science in producing the modern attitude towards the forces that control our destiny. While science does not offer an alternative faith, it does appear to propose a doctrine of man's place within the scheme of things that compels at least a review of the grounds for belief in God. For example, "the sciences of biology, physiology and psychology combine to throw doubt on human immortality". At the same time, the chapter concludes with three cogent lines of argument that indicate how the discoveries of science confirm rather than deny our confidence in the Divine ordering of the universe.

The writer turns next to the effects of literary and historical criticism not only on the character of the scriptures but on the historical basis of our faith. He discusses the extent to which Christianity can be divorced from history and sets aside any proposal to dissolve the connection. However, this clearly raises a number of vital questions. If we admit the validity of the critical methods, new definitions of the relations of Christian faith to historical fact are required. More positive ground is reached in a discussion of the interest that has developed during these hundred years in the psychology of religious experience. He makes a stout defence of the authority of such experience, although he notes that here also there is need for clarification between the true and the false in the mystical apprehension of God. In a useful chapter the author resolutely takes up the challenge offered by Logical Positivism to the objectivity of moral values. The final question is the vital one—What of the Person of Jesus? Who is He? Dr. Wood's view is that our Lord transcends all the dissolving influences of time and criticism and we are left with the real question of ultimate belief —our attitude towards the Christ.

This is a very honest book, written in an easy and attractive style that makes for enjoyable study. The argument is supported by excellent illustrations drawn from the general literature of the period. It raises a number of questions rather than provides answers—and these are all vital for every one who is concerned with religious faith in our day. Readers may miss reference to the strong resurgence of positive theology that has made its appearance during the last quarter of the century under discussion, but we have already observed that the writer is fully aware of these omissions. The main effect is to indicate the unsettled weather that still prevails in the contemporary religious atmosphere, although it would be unfair to leave the suggestion that the writer has no positive faith of his own.

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The Church in India, A Canadian Viewpoint. By REGINALD M. BENNETT. The Inter-Church Committee on Missionary Education, Department of Overseas Missions, Canadian Council of Churches. Toronto, 1954. Pp. x, 157. Paper, $1.25; cloth, $2.00.

INDIA is in the news today more than ever before in her agelong history. Her new independent status within the Commonwealth, her rapid industrial advance, her distinguished political leadership, along with older circumstances which have long surrounded her with mystery and romance, have greatly increased the desire of western peoples to know more about her. Basic social and political changes now taking place make it particularly necessary that Christian churches which maintain foreign missions in India should learn of these movements if they are to evangelize, teach, and heal, with understanding on their own part, and acceptance by the citizens of the great republic.

Mr. Bennett's modest book helps to supply this needed instruction. It is full of factual information, historical and statistical. It tells of the new India, and of the positive contributions which Christian missions have made to the creation of the modern state. A chapter entitled "The Struggle for Men's Minds" is a succinct account of the different gospels which present their claims for acceptance. The author then goes on to outline the growth of the Christian Church in India from early times, and presents brief accounts of the missions carried on today by Canadian churches. His particular knowledge of mass movements adds weight to a short discussion of this much-debated feature of the Indian church's expansion. In a valuable chapter, "The Growing Together of the Church in India", he describes the work and organization of the National and Regional Christian Councils, the movements which have led or are leading to corporate church unity, and the various enterprises in which the churches cooperate. He then discusses the new role which the missionary must play in the changing drama of Indian religious and social life, and concludes with an intelligent and guardedly optimistic discussion of the Christian Church's place in India's future. A map, a recommended bibliography, and an index add to the book's usefulness.

The Church In India, apart from telling of early missions of the Roman Catholic Church in that country, makes no further reference to this spiritual home of nearly one half of India's Christian family. Strictly speaking, the title claims too much, but it is naturally to be understood in the context of the missions which are of primary interest to members of the Canadian Council of Churches. The illustrations, with one or two exceptions, unfortunately, are similar to those which appear too often in missionary literature, that is, they are dull and uninteresting.

The Church in India should commend itself to study groups who wish to gain a larger mental picture of mid-twentieth century missionary endeavour than is usually supplied by publications of one denomination. For example, the reader of Bishop Heber Wilkinson's excellent little book

Thirst of India (The Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada, 600 Jarvis Street, Toronto, 1954) will find his interest increased by dipping into *The Church in India* at the same time. The two works, one general, the other particular, supplement each other in a remarkable way.

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Poetry and Dogma. By MALCOLM MACKENZIE ROSS. Rutgers University Press, 1955. Pp. xii, 256. $5.00.

FOR many people this will constitute a most revolutionary thesis in historical and aesthetic criticism. Professor Ross examines the relation between "firmament of belief" and aesthetic expression in the poetry of seventeenth century England. He looks, in particular, for indications of change in attitude towards the central act in the Church's life, the Holy Eucharist: where there is fluctuation or insecurity in the poetic apprehension of this sacrament, there occurs also more or less disruption of the entire firmament of belief. The Christian liturgy of the Mass, the history and theory of which is dwelt on at length, involves the Real Presence of the Redeemer and a real participation in His Holy Sacrifice: it is, then, a point of meeting between eternity and time, a point at which time is gathered up into eternity, and men are brought into the life of God through the person of Christ. A full sense of the Eucharist's meaning, therefore, involves a deep sense of the Incarnation, not simply as a far-off divine event pleasant to remember, but an event which has not only inserted a thread of divine conditioning into history, but which, through the Eucharist and the sacramental way which gives the Church life, continues actively to shape history and to deliver man into the loving arms of God.

What Professor Ross traces in the poetry of this tortured century is the disruption of the historical sense as it affects the religious imagination. Poets—Anglican, Puritan, Roman Catholic—lose the sense of the analogy of being, for which they substitute metaphor and simile. This affects not only eucharistic dogma, but the doctrine of the Church and the doctrine of God. Milton's God and his Christ in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* are only aesthetically acceptable when we acknowledge that they are not Christian, but counters used by Milton for his poetic purposes. The many examples of religious inhibition and frustration cited by Dr. Ross are a measure of the success of Archbishop Cranmer's attempts to destroy the Catholic sacrament.

This book presents some stylistic and intellectual difficulties, but the greatest difficulty of all is the onus of self-examination it throws on all Protestants who have inherited the doctrines and the divisions of the seventeenth century. If we are characterized, individually or as churches, by the same cluster of attitudes as Dr. Ross finds typical of the poetry: "justification [by faith alone], a subjective individualism, the abrupt

separation of the interior emotional religious centre from the corruptible but irrelevant flesh, the inevitable deterioration of Eucharistic symbol into illustrative metaphor"—then we must accept responsibility in large measure for the faithlessness of the age. For into the vacuum left by the departure of the sense of history, the sense of the corporate and the sense of man's grace-given capacity to respond to God in history and by means of the Incarnation, have come materialism, secular democracy and secular humanism: "The movement of the specifically Christian symbol from the centre to the periphery of the work of art implies a decisive shift of value and anticipates the emergence of a dominantly secular culture."

To enlarge our understanding of this movement in history, I should like to see similar studies undertaken in respect to other parts of Europe. The disruption of belief has been equally serious in Germany, Italy and France, though these countries do not have churches in whose firmament of belief may be studied the unresolved tensions between Protestantism and Catholicism. Dr. Ross's last chapter is very suggestive of the true function of Christian art as incarnational, taking up all life into the divine life in history, and here we see mentioned an international group of truly Christian writers: T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Mauriac, Bernanos, Graham Greene, Dostoievski. Altogether, this is a most stimulating book, and one whose implications exact humility and courage from the reader.

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Mediaeval Drama in Chester. By F. M. SALTER. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955. Pp. 138. $4.50.

PROFESSOR SALTER'S little book (the Alexander Lectures for 1953–54) is the fruit of a long apprenticeship in the study of medieval literature and institutions. Medievalists are, in my experience, a race apart. They are for the most part admirable citizens, ripened by research into the foundations of cathedral, court and university. As scholars they are paradoxical, for in their works appears the most punctilious and exact scholarship combined with a sentimental primitivism of a curiously rich and delicious kind. For their fellow-workers in the field, those who worry with them the borders of their dog-eared records, they reserve a suspicion sometimes murderous and always satiric; for medieval days and ways they profess a sweeping admiration and love.

These characteristics are nicely illustrated in Professor Salter's observations on the Chester cycle of religious dramas. On matters of date and circumstances of production he charges truculently into the phalanx of accepted critical opinion, and makes out what seems to me (a non-specialist) a good case for a later date of origin and a more "professional" production of these mysteries, making necessary some modification of the conclusions recently reached by Hardin Craig in chapter V of his monu-

mental *English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages*. But when he turns to assess the literary quality and cultural importance of the Chester cycle he dons his singing robes and delivers a highly emotional eulogy of these plays, which in the poignancy and naturalness of their folk-artistry go far beyond Chaucer (he says) in transmitting to us the faith and art of happy, *natural*, pre-Puritan Merrie England.

No one who has read at all widely in the mysteries, or has been lucky enough to see a sympathetic modern performance of some of them in their native settings, can deny their power to evoke devotion or the occasional brilliant economy of their dramatic devices. (The surviving texts have often passed through the hands of clever clerkly redactors, and it is consequently hard to distinguish the naive from the contrived in such excellencies.) But surely it is an intemperate enthusiasm which claims for them either the effect of Scripture or the dramatic force of the later secular drama. Professor Salter, by implication or directly, compares them to the medieval cathedral in beauty and above all in comprehensiveness; he would have us believe that they, like the cathedral, are, so to speak, shaped like the body of man and house his soul, and so present the microcosmography of medieval man. This is not true. The gild cycles, unlike the tropes from which they were developed, are street art and shop-front doctrine; they are thoroughly bourgeois. In Catholic Europe of the 14th–16th centuries, they, with the friars' sermons which are the homiletic commentary upon them, filled the same place in middle-class life as the modern evangelist, with his coarsely-turned *exempla* and his expensive arrangements. All of which, as Professor Salter admits of the mysteries, is good for business.

Yet there is one fact about these plays which complements or perhaps diminishes any limiting judgment upon them. Their authors performed the immense feat of cramming Fall, Redemption and Apocalypse into a half-week of afternoons; in so doing they turned history and revelation into festival and so involved it in the natural order, made it present as bread and ale. They accomplished the mystery of the Mass in reverse; the bread became flesh on the altar, but the flesh became John Smith on the pageant stage. Anthropologists tell us that the religious experience of man is based upon the primitive definition of the *sacred*, which is at once an awesome mystery and a familiar and protective entity. This quality of the consecrated is still present in the medieval mysteries: neighbourly and distant at once. Across this muddled and paradoxical holiness the iron curtain of Calvin's legalism descended and the modern world began, a world in which all major cultural phenomena, from the divine right of kings to the structure of the atom, may be described as contests between the sacred and the secular, a world in which those for whom this dialectic does not exist (Blake, Dylan Thomas) are called madmen. We should be grateful to Professor Salter, for, whatever the flaws in his superlatives, he reminds us of the historical infirmities of the modern imagination.

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